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Dungeon®

OFFICIAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® ADVENTURES

July/August 2001
Issue #87

Whence, whence alas, shall we seek our direction
When that we fear our hateful neighbor's might,
Who long have gaped to get Arcadian's treasure?

—Sir Philip Sidney

BONUS CD ADVENTURES!

Tinderbox
by Mike Selinker
The flames of vengeance threaten to consume a frontier town. A D&D adventure for 1st-level PCs but adaptable for levels 2-8.

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A cold-hearted foe guards his draconic father's trove. Artist Carl Critchlow depicts the fierce half-dragon Samakel from "Glacier Season."

A Tale of Two Chrises

With Apologies To the Mona Lisa

by Chris Thomasson

Let me tell you something about Chris Perkins. He's about the hardest-working, dedicated Joe you'll ever meet. Sure he's a snowback (Canadian, to the lay-person), but we don't hold that against him. Some of you who've been on the receiving end of a rejection letter might even think he's a jerk. It's a standing joke around here that Chris makes the rest of us look bad. He's always in the office on the weekends or late at night during the week to make sure the three (that's right, *three*) magazines he edits go out looking sharp. Many of you probably don't know that ever since the launch of *Star Wars Gamer* and the acquisition of *Star Wars Insider*, Chris has been pulling triple duty. Now he's responsible for all three publications. In other words, he's got one oar out of the water.

There's also an office legend around here that goes something like this: In 1986, a young Chris Perkins subscribed to *Dungeon Magazine* shortly after reading its announcement in *Dragon Magazine*. He was on board from Issue #1. When he got his hands on that first issue, he took one pass through and said, "I want to be the editor of this magazine someday."

You might be wondering why I'm telling you this. Well, beginning with the next issue, Chris will begin removing himself from the day-to-day operations of *Dungeon* and devoting himself to the two *Star Wars* magazines. Who, you might ask, can fill these mighty shoes? Who can wear this most-prestigious of hats? Who will be the next Editor of *Dungeon Magazine*?

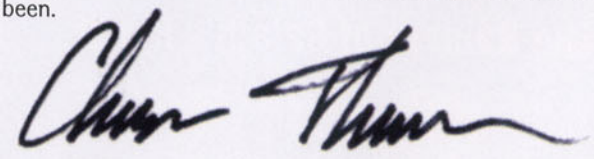
Well, that would be me.

Now let me tell you a secret: I'm just this side of complete panic. If you haven't figured out why yet, look at *Dungeon* five years ago and look at the book you hold in your hands. It's grown in leaps and bounds. Most of that is due to Chris. This magazine is the love of his life, and he's made it—with a little help from some of us lackeys—into a masterpiece. I honestly believe that. I also feel that there's always room for improvement, even when you're talking about the Mona Lisa.

Honestly, Chris has set me up nicely. I've been able to study under both he and Dave Gross (of *Dragon Magazine* fame) for the past two and a half years, and I feel prepared to make this step along with you, our faithful readership. I hope to bring the magazine before the eyes of a new generation of gamers, as well as cater to the demands of our long-time fans. I want to make *Dungeon Magazine* (insert blaring trumpet fanfare) the best gaming magazine on the newsstand. It sounds daunting. It sounds dangerous. It should. I'm ready. Are you?

When you buy a car, you can't call Ford and tell them you don't like the way the seats recline and ask to have it changed. Even if you get a petition signed by similarly disgruntled car owners, you're not likely to get new seats. You're stuck with what you've bought.

Dungeon is different. This is your chance to make something good even better. Send me your comments and questions. Send me your adventure ideas. This is your magazine. It always has been.



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Letters
Whazzzzup?!

Tell us what you think of this issue's adventures. Write to: Letters, DUNGEON Magazine, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Renton, WA 98055 or send an email to dungeon@wizards.com.

BEST BUY

I love your magazine and am happy to see each new issue. It's the best buy in the roleplaying game industry. However, I have to make a special point to commend you for Tracy Hickman's module, "Anvil of Time" (Issue #86). Although I am not a huge DRAGONLANCE fan, I found this adventure to be well-written and very creative. Time travel is tricky, but this adventure seems to handle it well. The handouts are superior and add a great deal to the adventure. I only wish my players didn't read your magazine so that I could use this in my campaign.

A faithful reader,

Monte Cook
Renton, WA

TEMPUS ERRATUM

Hey Chris, I just recently received my copy of Issue #86 and was looking over "Anvil of Time" when I noticed an error that must have occurred in the editing phase. In the "Adventure Background," the published adventure refers to the Anvil of Time as the place where the time bridge was created. This, unfortunately, is not what Tracy Hickman meant. In the draft he submitted (I was a playtester), the "Adventure Background" refers to the "time traveling device" being made in the Anvil of Time. The time bridge was made to focus temporal energies so that the time traveling device could be made here.

This time traveling device is not the time bridge, but rather Tas' time travelling device—the one Caramon is given in *Time of the Twins* and which Tas keeps after *Test of the Twins* (and uses in *Dragons of Summer Flame* and *Dragons of a Fallen Sun*). I think you or one of your assistants must have interpreted the "time traveling device" as the time bridge, which is indeed a different time traveling device, as it were.

Tracy asked me to notify you about this, so I have.

David Caveney
The DRAGONLANCE Nexus
www.dl3e.com

It was the stuffed monkey. He's to blame.

SCARLET FEVER

I reviewed "Lord of the Scarlet Tide" (Issue #85) in preparation for running it for my group. In doing so, I made several observations that I'd like to share:

1. The map on page 41 is problematic. The layout itself seems fine, but you've added "depth below sea level" figures that are laughable, at best. These depth numbers would seem to indicate that there are several massive drop-offs in the passages. The worst of these is the passage leading north from the river, from area U15 to area U17. According to the figures, it is apparently supposed to drop by 7,250 feet in only about 400 feet of horizontal run. If this is true, it would be a very difficult climb (nearly straight down, in fact) and should be described as such in the text.

Similarly, the river in the vicinity of area U6 (the waterfall) is indicated to drop 7,000 feet in maybe 300 feet of horizontal run. This would seem to indicate a tremendously long waterfall, yet the text for area U6 says that the waterfall drops only 50 feet!

Worst of all is the depth of the river, which seems to defy physics. West of area U15, the river is 750 feet below ground, yet, no more than 400 feet to

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the east, it is only 500 feet below ground. Since this is the direction of water flow in this river, it has gone uphill at quite a steep angle. North of area U6, the river has a depth of 9,000 feet, but by the time it flows to the region north of area U18 (a horizontal distance of perhaps 800 feet), it has flowed uphill to a depth of only 6,500 feet! I'm unaware of any special qualities of the Underdark that let water run uphill.

There seems to be no rhyme or reason to the depths assigned to the various locations. If I want to incorporate depth underground at all when running this adventure, I'll have to do quite a bit of re-working myself.

2. As I read through the Crown of Blibdoolpoolp section, it seemed like this: "Room, four whip ghosts . . . next room, four whip ghosts . . . next room, four whip ghosts . . ." Now, I feel that ghosts are pretty nasty monsters (they're not easy to kill, and just seeing them does massive ability-score damage to PCs). Inclusion of a few might not be so bad, but there are 35 ghosts in the temple! Granted, if the PCs are lucky or brilliant, they'll manage to avoid some of them, but I see these encounters as incredibly damaging to a party and very repetitive. Given that most of these ghosts are written so that they will more-or-less immediately attack the party and that the desecrated nature of the temple makes turning them difficult, I would be surprised if a party could make it through this area as written.

REMEMBER THAT CURE WOUNDS SPELLS CAN BE USED AGAINST UNDEAD WITH GREAT EFFECT.

Maybe I'm missing something here, but I think that both of these factors make this adventure difficult to use, at best, without some extensive re-writing on my part. That is not what I've come to expect from adventures in Dungeon Magazine. Thank you for your attention.

Mike Mistele
Brookfield, IL

We asked James Jacobs, author of "Lord of the Scarlet Tide," to address both of Mike's points. James writes:

1. The little numbers on the map of the Underdark (page 41) were misidentified; they are actually distance markers. The tunnels of the Underdark travel for miles; and the numbers in yellow identify the number of feet between encounter areas or passageway junctions. For example, the total distance to travel between area U8 and area U9 is 4,500 feet.

Of course, it's probably easier to just ignore those troublesome little yellow numbers altogether. This reduces the size of this portion of the Underdark, but it does keep everything at the same scale and isn't quite as confusing. The main impact this has on the adventure is to shorten the amount of time it takes to traverse the passageways and thus lessen the number of scarlet children encounters the PCs must deal with before reaching J'bhulgolboth.

2. The kuo-toan ghosts do indeed represent a dangerous threat to anyone who infiltrates the Crown of Blibdoolpoolp, but as far as ghosts go, these guys aren't nearly as dangerous as the more powerful ghosts found in the heights and depths of the Crown. They do not possess the horrific appearance or corrupting gaze supernatural abilities, so repeated encounters with them will not result in excessive ability point damage. (The Hidden Claw of Blibdoolpoolp is the only ghost in the Crown who possesses the horrific appearance ability.) Not all ghosts are created equal in 3rd edition, and the ghostly whip priests in the Crown shouldn't pose an insurmountable danger to a group of 9th-level characters. As written, the ghosts of the kuo-toan whips are actually much less powerful than spectres. The aid of a cleric will definitely help in this portion of the adventure. Remember that cure wounds *spells can be used against undead with great effect (along with a paladin's* lay on hands *ability), and spells like* invisibility to undead *also allow a stealthy party to bypass many of the ghosts. Even though the Crown is warded by a* desecrate *aura, a 9th-level cleric with no Charisma bonus can still turn at least three waves of the 3-HD ghosts with little problem, since the minimum Hit Dice a 9th-level can turn is 5. Even with their turn resistance and the* desecrate *aura in the temple, these ghosts should be fairly easy for a cleric or paladin to overcome.*

Nevertheless, if you find while you are running the adventure that the continued waves of kuo-toan ghosts are getting repetitive, you can handle the situation easily in one of three ways. If the party is having too easy a time, group the ghosts in "schools" of six or eight. If the encounters are proving too devastating for the PCs, you can reduce the number of ghosts encountered at a time to two or eliminate the encounters altogether. If you find that the ghost encounters are becoming repetitive, feel free to spice up some encounters by replacing a group of four whip ghosts with a pair of seashell golems or perhaps a group of gibbering mouthers spawned by the creature lurking in area C21. Rooms with pools of water can also be guarded by some water elementals (either four large ones or a pair of huge ones). Finally, the clerics of the Crown might have placed other kinds of undead guardians in the structure. PCs who have become used to attacks by the relatively weak kuo-toan ghosts might be shocked to face kuo-toan wraiths or spectres!

OUT OF THE ATTIC

As a fan of the nearly extinct genre of solitaire roleplaying, I was pleased to see "Pick-a-Path books" mentioned in the editorial in Issue #86. I was a little less pleased by the nature of the mention. I don't make a habit of reading through my gamebook collection while situated in my attic, and while I admit that solo adventures are often rather lacking in the quality writing department, there are numerous exceptions, many bearing the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS logo.

In fact, *DUNGEON Magazine* has been home to several solo adventures in the past; it would certainly be nice to see some of these return to life on the web. It also wouldn't hurt to see some new solo material in the pages of the magazine; 3rd Edition is still devoid of solo adventures, and I feel that this is a shame. While I realize that many people would rather turn to *Baldur's Gate* for their solo fix, let me make a point: A lot of *DUNGEON Magazine* readers browse the adventures for interesting ideas instead of using them exactly as printed. Wouldn't it be more fun, once in a while, to discover these ideas in an interactive way rather than by reading a lengthy outline? I certainly think so; I wonder if anyone else does.

Demian Katz
katz@netaxs.com

I recall the debates over solo (play-by-yourself) adventures back when Barbara G. Young was running the show. (Barbara says "Hi!" to everyone, by the way.) Like all of you, I have my personal bias to fall back on, but I'm curious to hear what our current readers think of solo adventures. If you have an opinion you'd like to share, drop us an email or send us a letter!

Updating the Classics

Last issue, you asked what adventures we would like to see reprinted and converted to 3rd Edition. I've been a subscriber since Issue #1. What follows is by no means exhaustive, but these are some adventures I liked originally and still remember.

My favorite author is Ted James Thomas Zuvich. He consistently wrote great adventures set in the same world. They were all classics and produced wonderful games. I would love to have these modules reprinted and converted to 3rd Edition:

- "Courier Service" (Issue #27)
- "The Siege of Kratys Freehold" (Issue #33)
- "Old Man Katan and the Mushroom Band" (Issue #41)
- "A Hot Day in L'Trel" (Issue #44)
- "The *Vaka*'s Curse" (Issue #50)
- "Caveat Emptor" (Issue #58)

Would God really allow the true cross to be destroyed? I don't think so.

David Howery has also written some fantastic stuff, most of it very good:

- "Falcon's Peak" (Issue #3)
- "The Elephants' Graveyard" (Issue #15)
- "The Leopard Men" (Issue #22)
- "Ghost Dance" (Issue #32)
- "Alicorn (Issue #34)
- "The Fiends of Tethyr" (Issue #54)
- "The Land of Men With Tails" (Issue #56)

I also appreciate low-level adventures. Some of the ones that have really stuck out for me over the years include:

- "Secrets of the Towers," by Larry Church (Issue #10)
- "The Moor-Tomb Map," by Jon Bailey (Issue #13)
- "Roarwater Caves," by Willie Walsh (Issue #15)
- "Night of Fear," by Mark Lucas (Issue #28)
- ". . . And a Dozen Eggs," by Randy Maxwell (Issue #30)
- "Isle of the Abbey," by Randy Maxwell (Issue #34)
- "Below Vulture Point," by Jeff Fairbourn (Issue #39)
- "Jacob's Well," by Randy Maxwell (Issue #43)
- "The Scourge of Scalabar," by Chris Perkins (Issue #74)
- "Keep for Sale," by Peter Zollers (Issue #79)

Some modules that took place in cities or keeps and required investigation were particularly good:

- "Of Nests and Nations," by Randy Maxwell (Issue #13)
- "The Wererats of Relfren," by Grant Boucher & William K. Wenz (Issue #14)
- "Nine-Tenths of the Law," by Willie Walsh (Issue #26)
- "Mightier Than the Sword," by Willie Walsh (Issue #29)
- "Goblin Fever," by Randy Maxwell (Issue #46)
- "The Assassin Within," by Paul F. Culotta (Issue #47)
- "The Unkindness of Ravens," by Jason Kuhl (Issue #65)

Some adventures had great atmosphere:

- "Bristanam's Cairn," by John Nephew (Issue #6)
- "Wards of Witching Ways," by Chris Perkins (Issue #11)
- "The Hunt in Great Allindel," by Rich Emerich (Issue #17)
- "The School of Nekros," by Lisa Smedman (Issue #27)
- "The Ghost of Mistmoor," by Leonard Wilson (Issue #35)
- "The Price of Revenge," by Steve Kurtz (Issue #42)
- "Journey to the Center-of-the-World," by Chris Hind (Issue #51).

There were some wonderful sprawling epic adventures:

- "A Rose For Talakara," by Wolfgang Baur & Steve Kurtz (Issue #25)
- "Beyond the Glittering Veil," by Steve Kurtz (Issue #31)
- "Khamsa's Folly," by J. Mark Bicking (Issue #40)
- "Blood & Fire," by John Baichtal (Issue #63)

James Landry
via email

As mentioned in last issue's "Letters" column, we intend to update old Dungeon Magazine *classics (making them compatible with the new D&D rules) and present them as downloads on our website. Overlapping deadlines and an overworked staff have thwarted us so far, but we are pushing forward with this project. We're also reading your letters and emails and compiling a list of your favorite modules from past issues. Thanks for your letters and your patience!*

Playing God

Issue #86 was fantastic—one of the best issues ever! Best of all was the adventure by Tracy Hickman, who was my favorite adventure writer in the 1980s. I hope to see more of Tracy's work in future issues of *Dungeon Magazine*.

"Mysterious Ways" (by Thomas Harlan) was exceptionally well-researched. As a plot point, would God really allow the True Cross to be destroyed? I don't think so. I think that, at the very least, maybe one celestial would be sent to aid the PCs in their final confrontation against Petra's villains, especially if the Cross was in danger of immediate destruction. It was good to finally see representations of modern faiths, though.

Julian Neale
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WA4 5JT England

Were I DMing the adventure, I might be tempted to give the PCs some celestial allies, if only to distract the nalfeshnee and vrocks while the PCs confront Abd ul Mejid and his cronies. Conversely, if the True Cross were destroyed, a celestial could appear and charge the PCs with a quest to retrieve a sacred scroll containing a miracle *spell (which could then restore the True Cross).*

One could also argue against God's intervention. The True Cross might be a way to try the heroes' faith—or teach them a lesson in humility. As the DM, you can decide how much deus ex machina *is appropriate for your game. Also, remember that the adventure takes place in an "alternate Earth" setting; the divine being referred to as "God" in the scenario could act very differently from God as defined by modern religion.*

continued on page 136

The Raiders of Galath's Roost

Derring-Do in the Dales

by Skip Williams

artwork by rk post • cartography by Craig Zipse

This adventure focuses on a Zhentarim attempt to spread terror in Mistledale, although it is suitable for almost any lightly settled area northwest of the Sea of Fallen Stars. "The Raiders of Galath's Roost" is suitable for four 1st-level characters, but PCs should be at least 2nd level before tackling the adventure's second half, the Zhentarim Citadel. Even in the first half of the adventure, many of the encounters are quite formidable for 1st-level characters, and the PCs might find it necessary to withdraw and recover one or more times before completely exploring the ruins.

Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Traps

Adventure Background

Of all the dales, Mistledale has long been regarded as the most secure, tranquil, and bountiful. Most dalesfolk will tell you (without envy or rancor) that Mistledale seems to have had less than its fair share of troubles over the last century. That might be at an end.

Mistledale is surrounded on three sides by the forest of Cormanthor, and the forest is increasingly becoming a frontier where the interests of humans, elves, and drow clash. Drow raids on the peaceful villages and farms of Mistledale have become downright commonplace of late, especially on moonless or overcast nights. Mistledale is now at war—not an intense or dramatic war, to be sure, but a war nonetheless.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players to begin the adventure:

> The peaceful land of Mistledale has been greatly troubled of late by raiding drow who strike on moonless nights and then retreat under cover of darkness. Chasing marauding drow over the fields and hedgerows of Mistledale has proved futile so far, but a new development has caught your notice. Rumor has it that the drow are using the abandoned keep of Galath's Roost, a ruin a few leagues east of Glen, as a base for their raids.
>
> Troops sent to investigate the site have found a few monsters but no signs of habitation. Nevertheless, raids in the northeast end of the dale have been heavy, and a company of militia recently sent to watch the keep through the night was completely wiped out, the soldiers gone without a trace.
>
> Some dalesfolk are not so sure the drow are to blame for the strange doings at Galath's Roost. Until now, drow raids have been sporadic, and most of them have taken place not only on moonless nights but also always within half a night's march of the forest. These new raids seem to occur more often, and on moonlit nights most of all. Furthermore, at least some of the raiders seem to be mounted.

> Galath's Roost has long been rumored to be haunted by ghosts of long-dead bandits. Perhaps the ghosts of Galath's band have awakened to raid again. In any case, a great treasure is reputed to lie hidden in or below Galath's Roost, and that is enough to get anyone's attention.

There are indeed strange things afoot in the vicinity of Galath's Roost. The Zhentarim believe they have an opportunity to stop traffic moving up the Moonsea Ride to Hillsfar and thus harm a rival. Traffic along the Ride has slowed already thanks to the recent destruction of Tilverton, and the Zhents have decided to interdict the remaining traffic before it leaves Mistledale. The recent drow activity in the dale provides an excellent cover for this activity. Of course, the Zhents are not above doing a little raiding in the dale themselves.

The Zhent raiders enter and leave the dale through magical portals, and one of their exit portals is near Galath's Roost.

Character Hooks

Mistledale's troubles have become widely known, and the PCs might become involved for any number of reasons.

- A character is asked (perhaps by a family member, cleric, or some other authority) to investigate the situation in Mistledale and report on the true threat posed by the drow. (This is particularly suitable for elven PCs or characters who hope to develop connections with an organization for good, such as the Harpers.)
- One of the characters is descended from one of the soldiers who sacked Galath's Roost years ago, and she has set forth to find the treasure reputedly hidden there. The character might have some clue to where the treasure lies, such as the following rhyme:

Seek the fruit of the vine
To find the gold that once was mine.

(The keep's treasure is hidden in what used to be the wine cellar.)

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for a party of four 1st-level PCs. You can also run the adventure for larger groups of higher level. Modifying the adventure for groups of four higher-level PCs is a fairly simple matter if you follow the general guidelines below:

2nd-level PCs

As written, the adventure should provide a 2nd-level group with a significant challenge, especially in the second half. However, some changes should be made. In the Galath's Roost half of the adventure:

- Increase the number of kobolds in area **G21** (the first half) to ten.
- Increase the total number of giant ants and giant bees by two each (location is DM's discretion).

In the second half of the adventure, make the following additional changes:

- Add one more fiendish wolf to area **R7** of the keep.
- Give the following NPCs each one additional character level: Jebalek (illusionist level), Yvan, Malvina, Zetta, Suddilis.

3rd-level PCs

Make the changes outlined above. In addition, in the Galath's Roost half of the adventure:

- Add two more krenshars to area **G22**.
- Give the water mephit in area **G14** maximum hit points.
- Add a second assassin vine to area **G16**.

In the second half of the adventure, make following changes in addition to those outlined above:

- Give each of the lieutenants another barbarian level.
- Give each of Yvan's assistants another wizard level, and each of Suddilis' acolytes another cleric level.
- Make Murzim (area **R7**) a 1st-level rogue instead of a 1st-level expert.

4th-level PCs

Make the changes outlined above. In addition, in the Galath's Roost half of the adventure:

- Make the water mephit in area **G14** more aggressive, and place a second mephit in the room (assume it has just been *gated* in by the original mephit).
- Give the assassin vines in area **G16** maximum hit points.
- Increase the total number of giant ants and giant bees by two more each (that's four more total).

In the second half of the adventure, make the following changes in addition to those outlined above:

- Give each of the lieutenants one more barbarian level (now 3rd level), and each of the guard sergeants one more fighter level (now 2nd level).
- Give the following NPCs each one additional character level: Jebalek (now 4th level), Yvan (now 5th level), Malvina (now 4th level), Zetta (now 3rd level), Suddilis (now 5th level).
- Add one additional guard to areas **R2**, **R4**, **R13**, **R19**, **R22**, **R27**, and **R28**.

You will need to adjust the amount of treasure to match the party's starting level; use the following simple formula:

Total GP Value in Treasure = Party's Average Level × 7,500 gp.

- One of the characters has a relative or a mentor who has recently disappeared, possibly kidnapped by raiders. This person could be a resident of the dale or could have been part of a caravan going to or from Hillsfar.

In any case, there is money to be made at the keep. The authorities in Ashabenford have offered a bounty of 100 gp for any raider captured alive, but only 25 gp for a dead raider (and then only if the bounty hunter can prove the slain person was a raider).

PART ONE: GALATH'S ROOST

Galath's Roost is an abandoned bandit lair that fell to Sembian troops more than four hundred years ago. It is still rumored to hold a great treasure and harbor the ghost of Galath. There's a hint of truth to both rumors. There is a treasure hidden in the keep (though not so large as legend would have it). There's also a ghost, but not Galath's.

The Keep and Environs

The ruins of Galath's Roost lie in the forest about fifteen miles east of the hamlet of Glen, at the northeast end of Mistledale. The ruins consist of the crumbled remains of a stone castle and a surrounding dry moat, now largely taken over by the forest. The keep's upper stories were made of wood and were burned away four hundred years ago when the Sembians attacked the place.

Features

All the surviving parts of the structure are made of stone, now badly cracked from fire and weathering.

Ditch and Rampart: A dry moat roughly 10 feet wide and 10 feet deep surrounds the keep. Its walls have slopes of about 60 degrees. The inner slopes once were studded with sharpened wooden stakes to discourage attempts to scale them, but these have since rotted away. Now, the whole ditch is filled with vines and brambles.

Climbing into or out of the ditch requires a Climb check (DC 5). The undergrowth in the ditch slows movement by half for Small, Medium-size, or Large creatures.

Curtain (Outer) Walls: About 10 feet thick overall, these are made from courses of stone a foot thick, with dirt and rubble sandwiched in-between. They are anywhere from 5 to 15 feet high. Their Climb DC is 15.

Inner Walls: The ruined buildings inside the curtain wall have stone walls 2 feet thick and 10 to 15 feet high. Their Climb DC is 20.

Dungeon Walls: The areas underneath the keep have either natural limestone walls or smoothly finished masonry walls at least 2 feet thick. Both types of walls have a Climb DC of 25.

Environment

During the day, the aboveground areas in and around the keep get plenty of light. There are about 10 hours of light each day, leaving 14 hours of darkness. A waxing moon rises an hour after dark and sets 4 hours before dawn.

Areas below the citadel are dark around the clock unless noted otherwise.

Terrain: Most aboveground areas are light forest for purposes of spotting and encounter distances (see page 60 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Some areas on the map indicate

heavy forest. The area inside the keep's curtain wall is considered clear (but note that the courtyard is only 100 feet square and many obstacles block line of sight).

Temperature: The area around the keep is comfortably warm during the day. At night the temperature drops to near freezing, and characters without cold weather gear feel distinctly uncomfortable. Anyone remaining outside without a campfire or cold weather gear must make hourly Fortitude saving throws (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage each hour (see page 86 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

The underground areas of the keep remain comfortable around the clock.

Random Encounters

The area around Galath's Roost is a busy place. Once per hour, when the party is moving around above ground and not already in a keyed encounter area, there is a 20% chance they might have a random encounter, rolled on the table below. If the party has stopped to rest somewhere, roll for random encounters once every 4 hours.

Roll d%	Random Encounter	EL
01-30	Giant Ant Worker (1)	1
31-40	Day: Giant Bee (1)	1/2
	Night: Krenshars (2)	2
41-50	Kobolds (6)	1
51-60	Male Drow Rgr1 (2)	5
61-70	Ogre (1)	2
71-80	Large Monstrous Spider (1)	2
81-00	Day: No Encounter	—
	Night: Zhent Raiding Party	3

Giant Ant Worker: This creature is out foraging for the colony at area **17** and has blundered across the party's path. It does not attack unless the party disturbs it in some fashion. If the party slays the queen ant at area **G17a**, the colony disperses after one day. Thereafter, treat this result as no encounter.

Giant Ant Worker (1): hp 9; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Giant Bee: Like the giant ant, this creature is foraging (for its hive at area **G19**). Also, like the giant ant, it is not dangerous unless attacked. Unlike the ants, the hive does not disperse if their queen is killed, since they have three new queens pupating in area **G19a**. Should the party locate the unborn queens and destroy them, the hive survivors disperse in one day. Thereafter treat this result as no encounter.

Giant Bee (1): hp 13; *Monster Manual,* page 206.

Krenshars: These creatures have a den at area **G2**. Each night at dusk they leave to hunt. The krenshars stalk the party and attack, using their *scare* abilities before closing to melee. If the party slays them, the den lies empty; treat this result as no encounter from now on.

Krenshars (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual,* page 125.

Kobolds: This gang of kobolds is scouting and hunting for their warband encamped in area **G21**. They're aggressive enough to attack the party, but only with ranged weapons. They scatter if the party closes to melee range. Kobolds hate bright light, so they only venture out during the day when it's overcast. If you decide it's a bright and sunny day, treat this result as no encounter. Casualties inflicted on the kobold gang are replaced from the ranks of the kobold warband, but when the warband is reduced to six kobolds or fewer, they kill their prisoner (see area **G21a**) and evacuate the keep. Thereafter, treat this result as no encounter.

Kobolds (6): hp 2 each; *Monster Manual,* page 123.

Drow Rangers: This pair belonged to a larger force sent to raid the village of Glen. While these two were away scouting the village, a Zhent raiding party traveling to the portal at area **11** became embroiled in a fight with the main body of the drow raiding party camped nearby at area **G12**. Now these two drow are lurking about, trying to figure out what happened to their comrades. If they spot the party before the party spots them, they shadow the group and try to pick off a straggler for questioning. If spotted themselves, they try to evade, attacking only if pursued.

Anuth and Shidul, Male Drow Rgr1 (2): CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall, 5); HD 1d10+1; hp 11; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 leather armor); Atk -1 melee (1d8/crit 19-20, longsword), -1 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, short sword), or +4 ranged (1d8/crit ×3, composite longbow); SA favored enemy (elves); SQ drow (see *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +7, Move Silently +7, Search +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +7. *Feats:* Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore), Track.

Possessions: Leather armor, longsword, short sword, composite longbow with 20 arrows, 2 *potions of cure light wounds, potion of hiding.*

Development: If captured, the drow complain that this whole area has become as busy as a highway. They offer to share what they know about the area in return for their freedom (but note that the party can claim a bounty on them, see "Character Hooks" above). They know the following:

- "There is reputed to be an old elven crypt around here somewhere." This is true; areas **G21-G24** comprise the crypt.
- "A fair number of horse-mounted troops have been passing by here recently, and we drow don't use horses much. At first we thought the cavalry was from Mistledale, but now we don't think so. For one thing, these troops dismount to fight."
- "Somebody wiped out a group of us camped out near here, and it's a good bet that somebody took at least one of them, Gwenect Moondark, prisoner. We assume this because we did not find her body." The drow can direct the party to the abandoned drow campsite (area **12**) and to the drow graves (area **G13**).
- "Why are we raiding Mistledale? Because the humans of Mistledale tend to think that the forest of Cormanthor belongs either to them or to the loathsome elves. It's time they learned differently."

Ogre: The ogre has come to the vicinity to poke around a bit and maybe rob someone smaller than himself. He attacks without hesitation.

Ogre (1): hp 26; *Monster Manual,* page 144.

Large Monstrous Spider: This creature is hungry and on the hunt, and the party looks like a smorgasbord to it. A hunting spider, it prefers to attack from the rear and uses its webbing freely.

Large Monstrous Spider (1): hp 22; *Monster Manual,* page 210.

Zhent Raiding Party: This encounter occurs about an hour before dawn. These troops have just waylaid a small caravan

on the Moonsea Ride and are hurrying to the portal at area **G11**. They are mounted on light warhorses. They ride up to area **G1**, then swing east around the keep to area **G11**, following the trail between areas **G1** and **G11** shown on the map.

The Zhents don't want anyone to discover the portal, and they attack to kill if they spot the party. Because none of them has riding skills, they dismount to fight. Note that the raiders have already suffered some damage (current hit points for damaged NPCs are listed in parentheses) and cast a few spells.

Zhent Raiders, Human War1 (2): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 9 each (5 currently); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk +5 melee (1d12+3/crit ×3, masterwork greataxe), or +3 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3), mighty composite longbow [+2]); AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +5, Jump +3, Wilderness Lore +3. *Feats:* Track, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: Studded leather, masterwork greataxe, mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, silvered dagger, climber's kit.

Zhent Raiders, Half-orc War1 (3): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid (orc); HD 1d8+1; hp 9 each (1, 3, 9 currently); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk +6 melee (1d12+4/crit ×3, masterwork greataxe), or +3 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3, mighty composite longbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +4, Jump +2; *Feats:* Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: Studded leather, masterwork greataxe, mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, silvered dagger, climber's kit.

Lieutenant Laskur, Male Half-orc Bbn1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 1d12+1; hp 13; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft. (scale mail, base 40 ft.); AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 scale mail); Atk +6 melee (1d12+4/crit ×3, masterwork greataxe), or +3 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3, mighty composite longbow [+2]); SA rage 1/day; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +5, Jump +3, Listen +4, Wilderness Lore +4. *Feats:* Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: Masterwork scale mail, masterwork greataxe, mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, silvered dagger, climber's kit, *potion of cure light wounds,* key to personal room (area **R18d**).

Nehum, Male Human Wiz(Evo)1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 1d4+4; hp 8; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SQ, Evocation specialist; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +5, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts and 10 silvered bolts, dagger, 2 tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure light wounds, potion of cat's grace,* key to personal room (area **R18b**).

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic;* 1st—*color spray.* Other spells already cast.

Spellbook: 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights*, daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare*, ghost sound, light*, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation read magic resistance;* 1st—*burning hands, color spray, magic missile*, sleep, true strike.*

*These spells belong to the school of Evocation, Nehum's specialty. Prohibited school: Conjuration.

Kletus, Human Clr1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 1d8+1; hp 9 (8); Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (splint mail, base spd 30 ft.); AC 17 (-1 Dex, +6 splint mail, +2 large shield); Atk +2 melee (1d8+1, masterwork morningstar), or -1 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA smite, rebuke or command undead; SQ +2 to saving throw DC of an compulsion spell; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref -1, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +5, Perform (chant, drum) +1, Spellcraft +4. *Feats:* Iron Will, Scribe Scroll.

Possessions: Splint mail, large steel shield, masterwork morningstar, light crossbow with 10 bolts and 10 silvered bolts, *potion of cat's grace,* scroll of *protection from elements,* two scrolls of *cure light wounds,* key to personal room (area **R24a**), key to personal strongbox.

Spells Remaining (3/2+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds;* 1st—*command*.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day: +4 attack, +1 damage), Tyranny (+2 to save DC of compulsion spells).

Development: If captured, the Zhents claim they were fleeing from an attack on their caravan and mistook the PCs for bandits. The lieutenant and the spellcasters stick to the story. The warriors also stick to the story unless separated from the rest of the group. A successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check prompts the prisoner to admit they are raiders in the employ of Zhentil Keep. The prisoner knows about the portal at area **G11** but claims that he doesn't know how to operate it. Using the portal is a job for an officer or spellcaster.

If pressed hard (Diplomacy or Intimidate check with a +5 to the prisoner's Sense Motive roll), the prisoner notes that the officers and spellcasters have some sort of symbol on their left palms that probably has something to do with operating the portal. If the lieutenant or one of the spellcasters is confronted with the facts, a successful Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate gets the PCs directions for finding and using the portal (see area **G11** for details).

In any case, a search of the prisoners reveals that the lieutenant and the spellcasters each have an eye tattooed on the palms of their left hands. If the PCs question them about the tattoos, the prisoners say a staring eye is the symbol of their adventuring company, The Seekers.

Any reasonably vigorous questioning also will reveal information about the raider's base. See the "Captured Zhents" section on page 29.

This encounter can occur only once every ten days, otherwise treat as no encounter.

Treasure: The warhorses' saddle bags are stuffed with goods from the caravan the raiders just attacked—mostly rugs, carpets, and spices from the south of Faerûn. There is one exquisite carpet worth 2,500 gp, two small rugs worth 90 gp each, and three boxes of spices worth 110 gp each. The raiders also have 150 cp, 200 sp, and 120 gp as well as a collection of mundane items of only nominal value such as skins of wine, rations, and the like. The party can find ready buyers for the war horses and claim a bounty on the raiders (see "Character Hooks" above for details).

Timed Encounters

Sometime before the party finishes exploring the keep, they should have the two encounters described below. These encounters provide information that serves as a link to the second half of the adventure.

Elven Fighters

This encounter should occur the first day the party spends at the keep.

Creatures (EL 2): Two brothers, Simimar and Lathai Evioro, hail the party. They are part of a larger force formed in Tangletrees to help curb drow intrusions into Mistledale. The force's mission is not completely altruistic, as the drow threaten the elves of Cormanthor just as certainly as they threaten the dalesfolk. The pair approaches the party warily, and they attack if the party seems hostile.

Simimar and Lathai are trying to discover what happened to two fiends of theirs, Nylian Moonglade and Inialos Oakwood. Nylian and Inialos were scouting this area about a tenday ago, shortly after the militia company was wiped out. They know that Nylian was killed, because they found his body not far from the keep, but they haven't seen any sign of Inialos.

Simimar and Lathai, Male Moon Elf Ftr1 (2): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 1d10+2; hp 12 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (breastplate, base 30 ft.); AC 13 (+1 Dex, +5 breastplate); Atk +4 melee (1d10+2/crit 19-20, bastard sword), or +2 ranged (1d8/crit ×3, composite longbow); SQ moon elf (see *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*); AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +2 [+4 ranks, +2 Str, -4 armor], Jump +2. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Possessions: Breastplate, bastard sword, dagger, composite longbow with 20 arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (Simimar), *potion of endurance* (Lathai).

Development: If the party speaks with the brothers, they offer to share what they know about the area.

- "Many centuries ago, this area was the site of an elven watchtower, but it was abandoned long before humans came to what is now called Mistledale."
- "A burial crypt, part of the tower dungeons, might indeed have survived. If so, it will be heavily guarded by magic and ought to be respected and left undisturbed."
- "The area has long been reputed to be haunted. This could be a mere rumor, a true account of the ghost of the bandit Galath, or a tale of an older, elven ghost."
- "A number of horse-mounted troops have been active in the area recently, which is curious. They probably aren't drow troops, and they certainly aren't elves."
- "Someone has been camping on the hill south of the keep. There are signs of a fight back there, including three graves."

If the party has visited area **G13**, they probably know something about the graves. The brothers are interested in anything the characters have to tell.

- "Something dangerous is lurking around the keep. One of our friends, Nylian Moonglade, was killed north of here. We found his body. We have no idea what happened to his companion, Inialos Oakwood."

Riders of Mistledale

This encounter can occur anytime after the party encounters Simimar and Lathai, preferably after the party has explored the keep.

Creatures (EL 5): The constabulary of Mistledale is interested in the keep, too. This group of riders is led by the ranger Jarrod Rold. Jarrod and his troops have been busy patrolling the dale. They recently paid a visit to Wolcott Manor, the site of a raid two tendays ago. There, they interviewed survivors who saw the mounted Zhent raiders. They also discovered signs left from an old raid (wine stains from a leaking container) and have followed them here. They hail the party, eager to talk. If the PCs make any hostile moves, the riders attack, trying to take prisoners if they can.

Jarrod Rold, Male Human Rgr1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 11 in. tall); HD 1d10+1; hp 11; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., 50 ft. when mounted; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk +1 melee (1d8+2/crit 19-20, longsword), +1 melee (1d6+1/crit 19-20, short sword), or +3 ranged (1d8/ crit ×3, composite longbow); SA favored enemy (elves); AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Ride +5, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +7; *Feats:* Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore), Track.

Possessions: Studded leather, longsword, short sword, composite longbow with 20 arrows, 2 *potions of cure light wounds, potion of endurance.*

Special: Mounted (+1 attack bonus on melee attacks against Medium-size or smaller creatures that are not mounted).

Riders of Mistledale, Male/Female Human Ftr1 (4): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (average 6 ft. tall); HD 1d10+2; hp 12 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (chainmail, base 30 ft.), 50 ft. when mounted; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail, +2 large shield); Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/crit 19-20, longsword), or +3 melee (1d6+2/crit ×3, light lance), or +2 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, composite shortbow); AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Ride +5, Handle Animal +3, Jump -1; *Feats:* Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack.

Possessions: Chainmail, large wooden shield, longsword, light lance, dagger, composite shortbow with 20 arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds.*

Special: Mounted (+1 attack bonus on melee attacks against Medium-size or smaller creatures that are not mounted).

Rider of Mistledale, Male Human Wiz(Div)1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 1d4+3; hp 7 (includes Toughness feat); Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., 50 ft. when mounted; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, masterwork light crossbow); SQ Divination specialist; AL LG; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +4, Ride +3, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Spellcraft +7; *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, dagger, two tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure light wounds,* two *potions of detect thoughts.*

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic** (×2), *flare, ray of frost;* 1st—*detect secret doors**, *shield, sleep.*

*These spells belong to the school of Divination, which is this NPC's speciality. Prohibited school: Necromancy.

Light Warhorses (6): hp 22 each; *Monster Manual*, page 197 (animal—horse, light war).

Development: Jarrod pursues the party if they try to avoid his group. He is interested to know what they have learned. He is equally willing to share what he knows, which includes everything Simimar and Lathai know, plus the following:

- "It is becoming clear that a new peril threatens Mistledale. The mounted raiders seem to operate from the edges of the forest, but it is clear they are humans. Where their base might be is a mystery, but at least one group came this way with their loot. We know because we have just come from a place called Wolcott Manor, where a raid occurred some time ago. The trail is old, but it leads here."

Jarrod is quite interested if the party has learned anything about the Zhent raids. He gets downright excited if the party has discovered the portal at area **G11** or if they have a Zhent prisoner. The *potions of detect thoughts* carried by the wizard in Jarrod's group can probably pry out any secret the prisoner is keeping.

- "During the past month, several dalesfolk have vanished, almost certainly abducted by the raiders. I don't have a list of names, but I do know that Zander Wolcott has lost a groom, one Walter Little, and Axel, a prized stallion. He's willing to pay a reward to anyone who brings back the pair."

The reward for returning Walter and Axel is 200 gp (100 gp for each). Walter is a tow-headed human boy just twelve years old, Axel a roan stallion with high sprits and a taste for apples. Jarrod also mentions that rewards probably will be offered for other missing people too, and that any stolen goods recovered will be bought back at a better price than the raiders could get on the open market (75% of their value rather than the standard 50%).

It is Walter who is responsible for leading the riders here. The raiders threw him over a packhorse along with several skins of wine, and Walter managed to poke a hole in one of them, leaving a trail of wine. Nobody spotted them right away, but the stains persisted here and there even through twenty days of autumn weather, and Jarrod was able to follow them. See area **G1** for more details.

Keyed Encounters (Areas G1–G24)

The keep has indeed become a busy place lately, as the party is about to learn.

G1. Road. An overgrown path leads about seven miles from the edge of the forest to the keep's front gate. The west fork of the path leads in the general direction of Glen. The east fork leads north and east toward the Standing Stone, but it fades away to nothing after a few miles.

After some hours following a twisting forest path, you emerge into a wide meadow dotted with individual trees. Ahead, you see a vast pile of splintered and vine-covered rock surrounded by a bramble-choked dry moat. Broken curtain walls, now not much higher than a human can reach, line the inner side of the moat. Several gaps, each as wide as a doorway, are visible from where you stand. A causeway of dirt and rock leads right across the moat to an opening in the curtain wall where a gate might have stood once. The wrecks of stone towers, each only slightly taller than the remaining walls, flank the opening.

Beyond the ruin, to the south, you can see a low hill with several vultures circling overhead.

The vultures are actually circling over area **G13**.

All is pretty much as it seems. The causeway is as ancient as the rest of the keep, but perfectly sound (the original builders didn't want to bother with a drawbridge). A timber gatehouse with two portcullises and several murder holes once guarded the keep's main entrance, but that structure is now gone without a trace.

If the PCs examine the area, they can find signs of recent activity. A Search or Track check (DC 10) reveals some reddish stains on the path. These splotches are stains from a leaky wine skin the Zhents carried here from Wolcott Manor almost a month ago (see the "Riders of Mistledale" timed encounter, above). There is a stain every 20 to 50 feet from here to area **G11**. A single Track check (DC 15), or twenty Search or Spot checks (DC 15), allow the characters to follow the trail.

A Track check (DC 20) made here or anywhere along the trail to area **G11** also reveals the tracks of horses (six or more) heading to and from area **G11**.

Development: No matter what the PCs do, check for a random encounter before the party moves on from here.

G2. Krenshar Den. A pair of krenshars have made a den under some fallen branches from the single old hiexel tree growing here. This pair of creatures attacked the militia company mentioned in the "Adventure Background" boxed text. The militia beat them off, but they were mauled so badly that a group of Zhent raiders passing by later that same night wiped out the survivors.

Creatures (EL 2): During the day, the krenshars doze in the shade, all but invisible (Spot check DC 35). They awaken when anyone comes within 20 feet and attack if the intruders come any closer.

Krenshars (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual*, page 125.

Development: A search of the den and the ditch to the south reveals splintered human bones and some ruined equipment: chainmail, short swords, spears, and assorted personal gear such as drinking cups, bedrolls (bloodstained), and clothing. A successful Search or Track check (DC 20) reveals signs of a struggle and tracks from humans, felines (the krenshars), and horses, all of which are very faint, thanks to their age.

G2a. Militia Graves. The victorious Zhents hastily buried four members of the Mistledale militia under the trees here, stripping the bodies of equipment first. (The Zhents didn't do this out of respect; they just wanted to hide the bodies.) Forest creatures have since dug up the graves and devoured the bodies, leaving only scattered bones.

G3. Sally Port. This secret door once served as a back door into the keep. Fairly well hidden to begin with, it is now buried under a thick stand of briars and takes a Search check (DC 25) to find it. It hasn't been opened in four hundred years and is well stuck, though the party can batter it down.

A passage behind the door leads to area G15.

Stone Secret Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 30).

G4. Blockhouse. This structure, now just a roofless shell, once guarded the main gate. Two stirges nest in the arrow slits.

Creatures (EL 1): The stirges are content to lie inside the ruin but attack anyone who enters.

Stirges (2): hp 5, 4; *Monster Manual,* page 173.

G5. Small Sinkhole. Part of the ceiling in area G16 has collapsed, forming this 5-foot sinkhole in the courtyard. The sinkhole's edges are dangerously unstable, and any character who comes within 5 feet might cause part of the lip to break away if he weighs more than 50 pounds. The PC is allowed a Reflex save (DC 15) to leap clear. A failed save dumps the PC into area G16, where he suffers 1d6 points of subdual damage from the fall and must face the assassin vine growing there.

If the party pokes around here too long, the assassin vine in area G16 might reach up and attack; when attacking prey on the surface, it cannot reach more than 5 feet from the sinkhole.

G6. Stairs. These stone stairs lead down 12 feet to area G14. The stairwell once had a roof and a sturdy door, but both are long gone now.

G7. Stable. This chamber once housed the keep's animals. A stone shelf at the south end served as a hayloft. The loft has long since collapsed into a pile of rubble.

Creatures (EL 3): A swarm of giant bombardier beetles has taken up residence in the rubble pile. The pseudodragon in area G8 occasionally amuses itself by stirring up the beetles, so they tend to loose their acid sprays at any intruders but do not pursue attackers who flee.

Giant Bombardier Beetles (3): hp 15, 14, 13; *Monster Manual,* page 206.

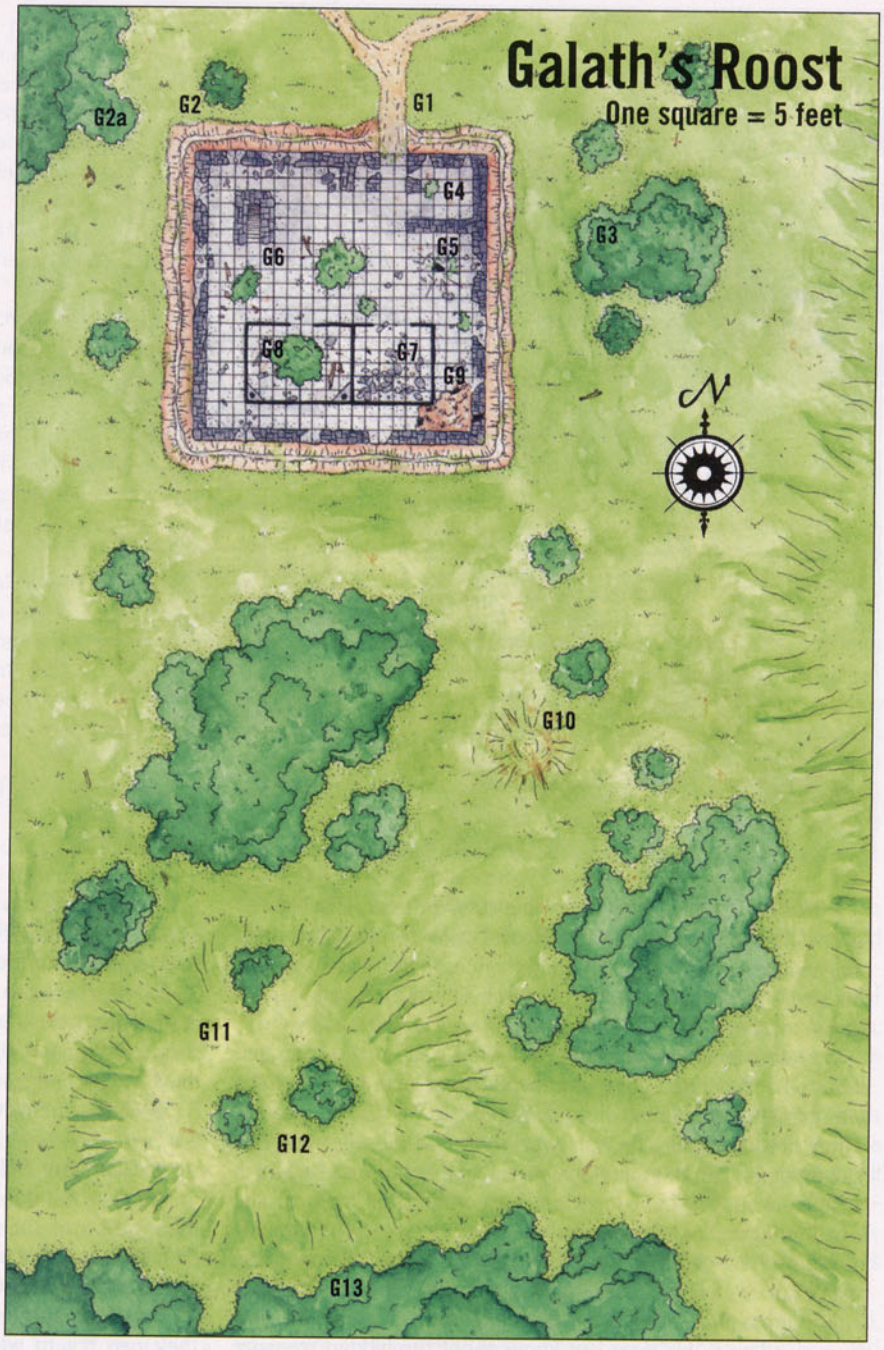
G8. Great Hall. Wooden partitions once separated this chamber into area for eating, sleeping, and cooking. The partitions have long since rotted away, leaving only the walls, the fireplaces, and a few feet of stone chimney above each fireplace. A stately oak tree has grown up in the dirt floor here.

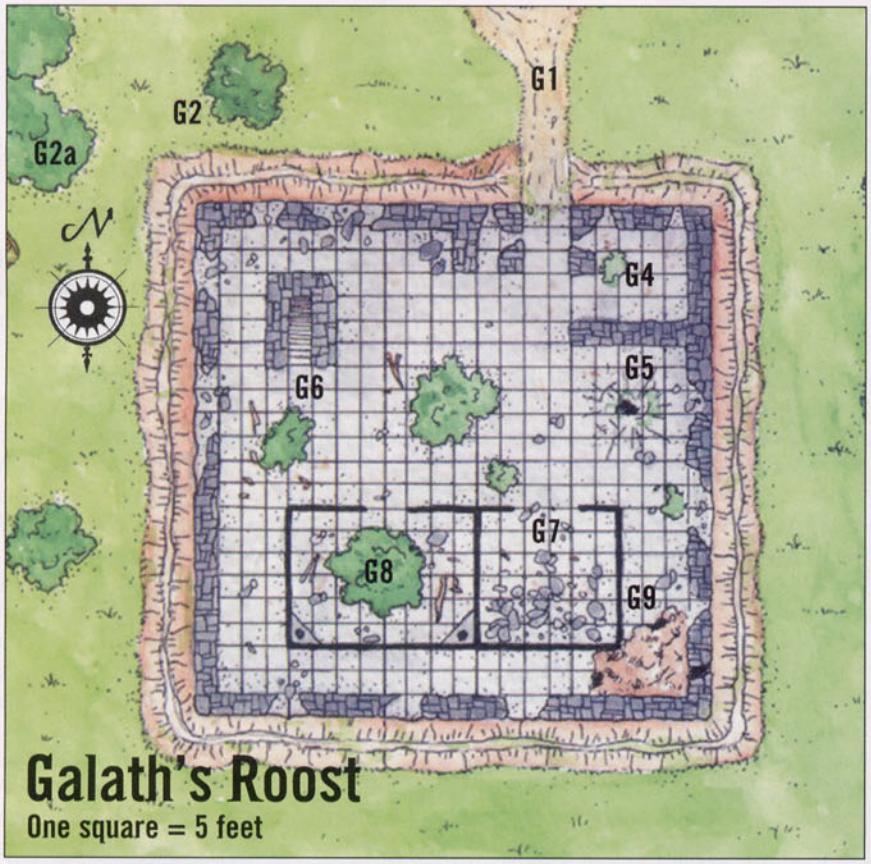
Creatures (EL 1): The tree is home to Rossal, a pseudodragon. Rossal has a high old time chasing the stirges in area G2 and harassing the beetles in area G7 (all in good fun, of course). Until recently, Rossal also raided the giant beehive at area G19 for honey, but the kobolds in area G20 have made that too risky, so Rossal is currently in something of a funk.

Rossal (Pseudodragon): hp 16; *Monster Manual,* page 152.

Tactics: Rossal is not aggressive, just bored. He hides in his oak tree, waiting for someone to walk underneath, then drops an acorn (treat as a ranged touch attack for no damage).

If anyone tries to climb the tree or makes any other hostile move, Rossal vigorously shakes a branch and looses a shower of acorns, this forces climbers to make a Climb check (DC 10) or fall out of the tree. Spellcasters caught in the shower must make a successful Concentration check (DC 10, cannot take 10) to complete their spells. Thereafter, anyone running or charging under the tree must make a successful Balance check (DC 12) or slip and fall as acorns roll underfoot.





While in the tree, Rossal has nine-tenths cover. If subjected to any kind of serious attack, Rossal tries to sting the most dangerous or aggressive character once, then hides in one of the area's two chimneys. Blockages inside the chimneys give Rossal total cover and concealment.

Development: Rossal knows quite a bit about the keep and about what has been going on. If the PCs amuse him (perhaps with some sort of comical overreaction to his acorn assault), flatter him, bribe him (sweets work well), or merely appeal to his better nature, Rossal tells them everything he knows, which is quite a bit. He can describe the contents of most of the keyed encounter areas, with the following exceptions: He knows nothing about areas G3 and G11 (he doesn't know these exist), nor area G15 (Rossal has never triggered the trap there and assumes that the passage leading east from there is a simply a dead end). He does not know about the hidden treasure in area G18. He has never visited areas G21-G24, but he knows about the crack in the wall of area G20 that leads there. Rossal cannot draw the party a map and quickly becomes bored if the PCs try to piece together a layout of the keep while he talks.

Rossal does not know the creature in area G14 is a water mephit. If fact, he thinks there are two creatures there, and he calls them "unseelie faeries."

Rossal can make the following additional observations about activities near the keep:

- "The horse soldiers come here often, every tenday at least, but they never seem to stay for long." The "horse soldiers" are the Zhents (Rossal doesn't know their nationality).
- "The horse soldiers always come down the path from the west, skirt the ruin, and then vanish somewhere to the south. It's as though the forest just swallows them up!" The possibility of a portal hasn't occurred to Rossal. Rossal has seen the Zhents climb the hill toward area G11.
- "The horse soldiers aren't friendly. One night I was flying along behind them and they started shooting at me! But I fixed 'em. I flew ahead, hid, and stung the last one in line. He fell off his horse and everything! The rest of them didn't even notice." The Zhent failed both his saves against Rossal's poison. Later, the kobolds in area G20 found the sleeping Zhent and took him prisoner.

G9. Anthill. This corner of the courtyard contains the top of the giant ant colony in area G17 with two plainly visible tunnel mouths on the north and west sides. It takes a successful Spot or Search check (DC 18) to see the hole in the curtain wall to the east.

A loose pile of rock and sand lies heaped against a corner of the wrecked curtain wall. The mass forms a semicircle perhaps 10 feet wide and at least as tall as a halfling. Three holes, each large enough to admit a human, dot the top of the mound.

Creatures (EL 2, 4 with soldier): If the PCs stand back and watch for awhile, they'll see two worker ants each bringing rock and dirt up from different holes.

The workers are busy extending the colony's tunnels. They defend the nest against any intruder who approaches, and 2 rounds after the fight is joined, a soldier appears from the third hole.

Giant Ant Workers (2): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Giant Ant Soldier (1): hp 11; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Tactics: A total of four workers and two soldiers occupy this portion of the nest. The remaining two workers and soldier lie below the surface, emerging to attack only if anyone starts digging around in the mound or probing the holes.

Development: If the PCs defeat all the ants on the surface, they can try to wiggle down the ant tunnels if they wish. It takes a successful Climb check (DC 15) to descend the steeply sloping tunnels, and the character moves at his climbing speed. PCs can use only weapons of Small or Tiny size inside the tunnels. All the tunnels here lead down about 20 feet to area G17. When someone other than an ant enters a tunnel, a worker or soldier from area G17 scurries up and attacks the intruder.

G10. Large Sinkhole. Part of the ceiling of area G20a collapsed long ago, creating this sinkhole. Over the years, the hole has widened, creating a fairly gentle slope down about 20 feet into the north end of area G20 (Climb DC 0).

The giant bees in area G19 use the sinkhole as the entrance to their hive, and PCs who observe this area will see giant bees occasionally going in and out.

G11. Portal. This area contains a magical portal that leads the second half of this adventure. The Zhents placed it here to make it easy to find, provided one already knows it's there. They chose to place it close to the ruined keep so that if the dalesfolk ever tracked the raiders to this area, they would think the raiders were based in the ruins of Galath's Roost. So far, the ruse has worked.

Nothing except a couple of bare spots in the grass marks this area. The Zhents wore the spots in the turf going through the portal.

A successful Search, Spot, or Track check (DC 15) reveals many tracks of booted feet and shod horses moving south over the bare spot, but no traces extend to the bare spots. There is also a scattering of miscellaneous items, arrows, torch stubs, and copper coins (all things the raiders have dropped).

The portal itself is an invisible disc 30 feet in diameter, with its lower edge resting on the ground. The portal has no physical substance, and it cannot be touched, tasted, seen, or smelled. The portal can be activated once a tenday and is currently inactive. A *detect magic* spell cast when the portal is inoperative indicates weak Transmutation magic.

Development: To trigger the portal, one must have the Eye of Bane drawn or tattooed on the left palm and must touch the left palm to the portal with the fingers outspread. The portal will not activate if fewer than ten days have passed since the last time it functioned.

The portal transports one to area **R1** of the Raider's Citadel.

G12. Campsite. Drow raiders have begun using this hilltop as a campsite for much the same reason the Zhents placed their portal here. The drow have been careful to conceal their presence as much as possible. A successful Search, Spot, or Track check (DC 15) reveals several circles of turf that have been cut away and then replaced. These mark a firepit and several holes where the drow have buried trash. A Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) also reveals six piles of leaves that look natural, but actually have been gathered up to make bedding.

G13. Drow Graves. As noted in the "Random Encounters" section, a party of Zhent raiders defeated a party of drow raiders at area **G12**. The Zhents killed three of the drow and took the third, Gwenect Moondark, prisoner. The Zhents buried the three slain drow here. Local animals have dug up two of the graves and started on a third. Vultures circle over the opened graves. There's not much left of the exposed bodies, but if PCs exhume the remaining grave, they can see that it contains a drow. The Zhents stripped the bodies before burying them.

G14. Pool. The pool here once served as the keep's water supply. This area, unlike the other underground areas, is faintly illuminated during the day thanks to the open stairwell leading down to it (from area **G6**). The boxed text below assumes the party has some kind of light (daylight, moonlight, or an artificial light source).

> Dampness enfolds you as you descend the short stairway. A faintly sulfurous smell tickles your nose, and it gets stronger the lower you go. There seems to be some sort of chamber beyond the stairs, and you catch a brief flash of blue-green light off to the right.

The sulfurous scent is a remnant of the resident water mephit's *stinking cloud* ability, used the last time Rossal, the pseudodragon from area **G8**, came down here. The flash of light is merely light reflecting off the pool.

This area is prone to echoes and other strange acoustical effects. Unless the characters move quietly (Move Silently check with a DC of 15), their movements set off deep echoes that rumble in the depths of the chamber and clearly announce their arrival.

The water in the pool is cold and fairly deep (15 feet in the center, 2 feet closer to the edges).

Creatures (EL 3): A water mephit has moved in here. From time to time, the mephit *gates* in a companion and the pair go off to make mischief. Currently only a single mephit is present (with all its magical powers available for use).

Water Mephit: hp 16; *Monster Manual*, page 133.

Tactics: If the mephit sees or hears the party coming, it retreats to the south end of the pool and hides, sinking down so that only its face is above water. The mephit blends in fairly well this way, and it takes a successful Spot check against the mephit's Hide check to see it unless it moves or attacks.

While the mephit stays submerged, it has three-quarters cover (+7 AC, +3 cover bonus to Reflex saves).

The mephit has heard the legend of the bandit Galath's ghost and takes a stab at being a "ghost" for awhile. It has not attempted this trick before, but the cave's peculiar acoustics lend verisimilitude to the attempt. Its voice is a tad shrill, but the chamber makes it boom. When it sees the PCs, it tries the following pronouncements:

- "Halt! Who goes there?"
- "What do the living seek in the sepulcher of Galath the betrayed? Betrayed by small-minded men, glory seekers and snivelers!"
- "The treasure of Galath is for Galath alone, but know this! There is a winged creature who lairs above, and it mocks me, day and night. Bring me the head of this beast, and a one-tenth share of the treasure shall be yours!"

The mephit is referring to Rossal, the pseudodragon in area **G8**. The mephit doesn't particularly want Rossal dead, but this sounds like something a ghost might want done. The mephit will bargain with the party, granting them any portion of the treasure they wish, save for his sword and shield. There is no treasure (at least not that the mephit knows about); the mephit is just playing with the party.

Should the party leave and return with a head (any head), the mephit claims the "fools" have brought the wrong one and commands the characters to leave.

- "An unseelie faerie? You see how the foul beast mocks me! Will no one rid me of this plague?"

If spotted, the mephit uses its *stinking cloud* ability, then tries to *summon* another water mephit. After that, it uses its *Melf's acid arrow* power and breath weapon. The mephit avoids melee combat, and remains in the water where its fast healing power is effective. As a last resort, it dives to the bottom of the pool and stays there until the party leaves.

G15. Lower Exit. The passage leading east ends at a secret door that opens outdoors (at area **G3**). The door is not deliberately concealed, but because it is stone it looks just like part of the wall. It takes a successful Spot or Search check (DC 15) to recognize it for what it is.

Trap (EL 3): The bandits who built the keep did not rely solely on the secret door to keep their "back door" safe. The squares marked with a "T" have a spiked bronze grate set in the ceiling. The grate is hinged along the east side, so that it can swing down and block the passage, sweeping through the squares along the way. The spikes are fashioned to resemble stalactites. A pressure plate in the floor releases the grate.

If triggered, the grate swings down and locks. Anyone in the squares marked "T" or the squares immediately to the west will be struck. Once the gate is down and locked, a stud hidden in the west wall unlocks it. Finding the stud requires a successful Search check (DC 20).

Hinged Grate Trap: CR 3; 3d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 13) halves damage; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25). PCs struck by the grate are pushed into the passage to the east unless they have the evasion ability and make a successful save.

Bronze Grate: 2 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 40; Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 15, 2 checks required).

G16. Daylight Grotto. This chamber lies below the sinkhole at area G5 and it is lit whenever the sun or moon shines.

You've come upon a scene of unexpected beauty. A veritable forest of varicolored stalactites and stalagmites cover the ceiling and floor of a rough-hewn cavern. A rent in the ceiling lets in light from the surface and a profusion of viny plants grow among the stalagmites on the floor, with a tiny, swift stream flowing through it all and vanishing through a crack in the wall to the east.

Because the sinkhole opens in the ceiling, it is not possible to climb down from area G5 without some kind of assistance (such as a rope or a *spider climb* spell).

Creatures (EL 3): An assassin vine grows below the sinkhole, ready to devour anyone or anything that falls into the cave or tries to pass by. The "X" marks the place where the vine is rooted.

Assassin Vine: hp 30; *Monster Manual,* page 20.

Tactics: The assassin vine simply lies in wait for any prey that comes within reach, then uses its *entangle* power and grabs what it can. The vine can only reach opponents with 20 feet of the "X", so it is possible for the PCs to ease their way through the east end of the chamber into area G17a. They also can simply stand at a safe distance and dispatch the vine with spells or ranged attacks.

Not all the foliage in this cave is part of the assassin vine; the rest is just a normal, ivylike vine that grows wild in the chamber. This material is not well rooted, and PCs who fall prey to the assassin vine's *entangle* attack can rip themselves loose more easily than usual (DC 15).

Development: A fight here alerts the giant ants in areas G17 and G17a, which come to investigate in 1d4 rounds.

G17. Giant Ant Colony. The small passage connecting this area with area G17a runs from inside the main mound and is not visible from the chamber.

This chamber has an odd smell about it, both acrid and musty at the same time. You see three great heaps of debris. Two of these seem to be mostly leaves, branches, and other litter form the forest above. A profusion of mushrooms and other fungi sprout from them. The third and largest pile consists of rocks and dirt. This is heaped against the cave wall and extends all the way to the ceiling. Several holes, each large enough to admit a human, dot the surface of the pile.

The giant ants here are preparing to settle in for the winter. The two piles of vegetable matter serve as larders for the colony (the ants feed on the fungi). The large pile of dirt marks the bottom of the colony (the top pokes through the surface at area G9).

Creatures (EL 5): Twenty-five ants live here, but most venture out to forage each day for several hours, leaving at most three workers and one soldier here at any given time.

Giant Ant Workers (3): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Giant Ant Soldier (1): hp 11; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Tactics: The ants are not tacticians. If they are not alerted before the party enters the area, the soldier is perched high on the main mound, watching the whole area while the workers tend the fungi beds and groom each other. They all scramble to attack any intruders.

If alerted in advance (see **Development**), the ants retreat into the main mound, with their heads barely sticking out. It takes a Spot check (DC 15) to see them. The ants charge the intruders when anyone gets close enough for a partial charge.

Development: Combat in areas G16 or G18 alerts the ants. The ants here also move to attack anyone trying to climb down the tunnels from area G9. All the ants here rush to defend the queen in area G17a if she is attacked.

G17a. Queen's Chamber. The mound of dirt and sawdust against the northwest wall contains about one hundred eggs (a new generation in reserve for the spring). The opening of the small passage leading to area G17 lies above the mound, about 10 feet off the floor.

Creatures (EL 3): The giant ant queen rests here with two worker ants always in attendance.

Giant Ant Workers (2): hp 9 each; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Giant Ant Queen (1): hp 22; *Monster Manual,* page 205.

Tactics: The ants here stay put, even if the ants in area G17 are attacked. If the party attacks the queen without dealing with the ants in areas G9 and G17 first, these ants rush to defend the queen and her eggs. (Note that this area's EL could become dangerously high if the party tries to fight all the ants at once.) The ants in area G17 move in immediately, the soldier using the small passage and the rest using the south entrance. (The ants would have to pass within reach of the assassin vine in area G16 to use the north entrance, and they won't do that even if the vine has been destroyed.) The ants from area G9 arrive in 1d4+1 rounds.

G18. Wine Cellar. Galath and his bandits stored wine and other beverages in this chamber.

The west wall of this cave is a series of hollows and narrow ledges, almost like shelves. Colored shards of broken glass litter the ledges, and more lie on the floor. A wide, shallow pool of green-tinted water fills the room's center, a stream of clear water flowing in from the north feeds the pool.

All the broken glass comes from wine bottles that were smashed when the troops who wiped out the bandits searched the chamber. Galath directed his minions to hollow out a space under the floor of this chamber to hold their loot, to discourage his troops from filching treasure and disappearing from the keep. He had the chamber sealed up with *stone shape* spells.

At the time, no stream ran through here, but over the years, the stream flowing from area **G14** shifted its course and flowed in here, pooling on the floor and eventually breaching the chamber. The copper coins in the treasure hoard have tinted the water in the pool green.

The pool is 3 feet deep in the center. Probing the pool reveals a few hairline cracks in the bottom, but no other openings (there aren't any). A *detect magic* spell cast on the area reveals three magical auras (see **Treasure** below)—two faint and one moderate—all located under the pool.

A dwarf (or other PC with the stonecunning trait) notes the pool's unnatural bottom with a Spot check (DC 15), as does a character with Knowledge (geology) or Profession (mining).

To get at the treasure, the party must excavate the bottom of the pool. The pool bottom has a Hardness of 6 and 80 hit points.

Creature (EL 2): A Large viper has crawled in here to hibernate for the winter. It lies curled up in the room's southwest corner can does not stir unless the PCs disturb it by spending more than a minute or two in here, pass within 10 feet, or attack it.

Large Viper: hp 12; *Monster Manual,* page 202.

Treasure: The chamber under the pool contains: 5,000 cp, 210 sp, 1,720 gp, a peridot (50 gp), a white pearl (70 gp), a topaz (500 gp), a scroll with three spells (*blur, stinking cloud, summon monster II;* all cast at 3rd level), a *wand of magic missiles* (3rd level; 44 charges; command word "jalkart"), and a *+1 longsword.*

The flooding has not damaged the treasure, though all the copper pieces have turned green and all the silver has turned black.

Development: A fight here alerts the giant ants in area **G17**, but the viper ignores activity in other nearby caves.

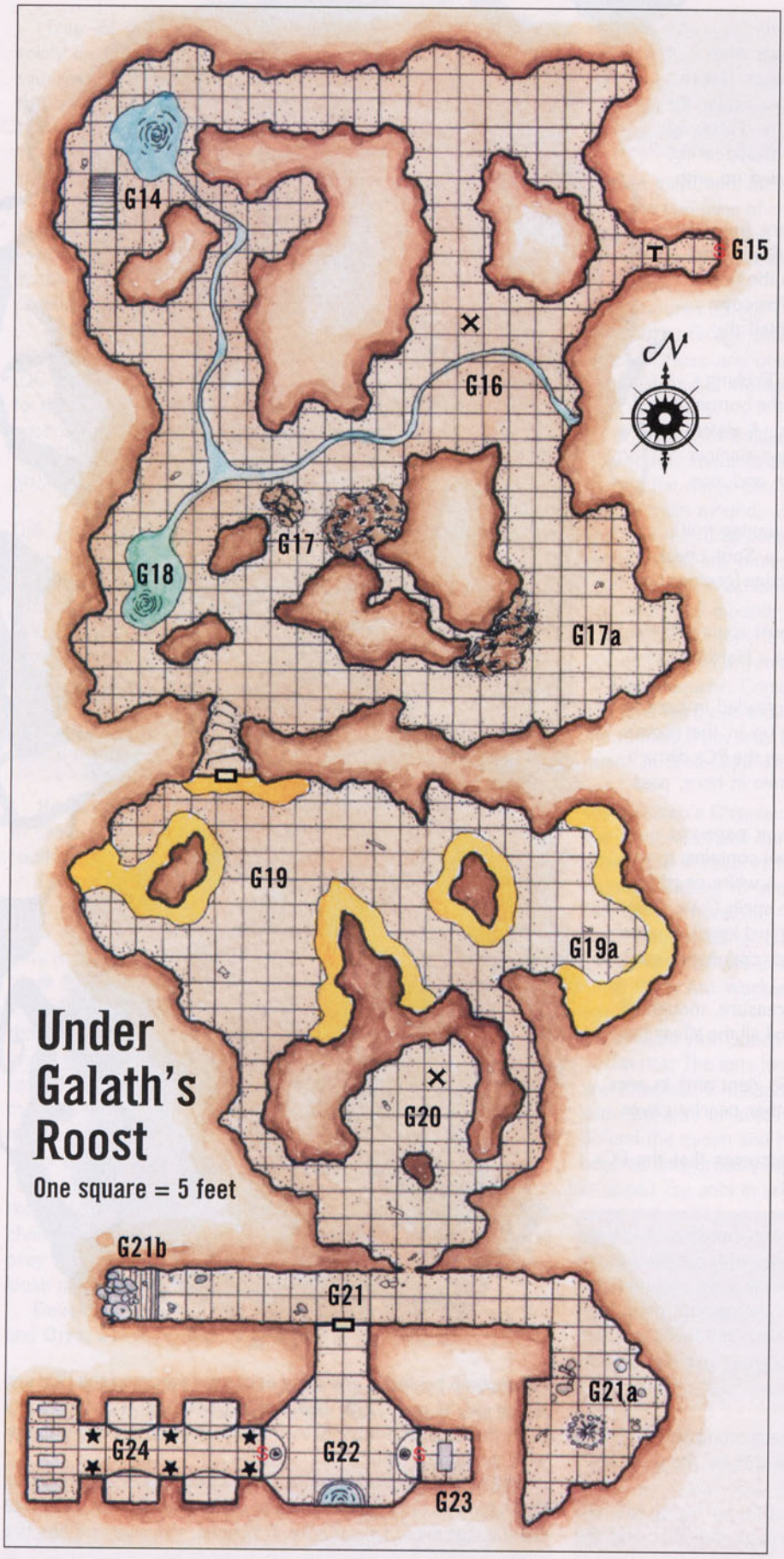
G19. Giant Bee Hive. The text below assumes that the PCs have a clear view of the hive's interior.

A flowery scent greets you as you peer into this chamber. The floor and ceilings are smooth stone, with a stalactite or stalagmite here and there, but most or the walls are covered with a thick, golden-brown lattice of hexagonal cells that stretch from floor and ceiling, though here and there you see normal, bare cavern walls. A deep humming fills the cavern from dozens of giant bees.

The north door leading into this area is stone and still very much intact. It is also blocked and glued shut by the giant honeycomb behind it.

Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 45). The break DC is for smashing through the door and the honeycomb behind it. The door opens outward and the PCs can try to pry it open. This task has a DC of 25. If the PCs pry open the door or simply hack through it, they still have to deal with the honeycomb.

Giant Honeycomb: 30 in. thick; Hardness 0; hp 60; Break (DC 30). The honeycomb is made of flammable wax and takes full damage from fire attacks. If burned, the wax catches fire



and suffers 2d6 points of additional fire damage each round. After the second round, a 5-foot pool of flaming wax forms at the base of the honeycomb, which deals 2d6 points of fire damage to anything within it. This flame spreads to adjacent sections of the honeycomb beginning the next round.

Creatures (EL 4): Seventeen giant bees, including the queen, live in the hive. The queen and two workers always remain in area **G19a**, and most of the bees go out foraging during the day, leaving nine bees in the hive (the EL listing assumes the daytime population of nine bees). A foray in here at night with all seventeen bees present would have an EL of at least 7—deadly for low-level characters.

Giant Bees (9 or 17): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual,* page 206.

Tactics: The giant bees are fairly placid creatures who do not attack unless they feel threatened. They swarm and buzz whenever an intruder enters but do not attack unless the interloper approaches a honeycomb, moves to area **G19a**, or attacks. If the PCs break their way in here from the north, the bees swarm and attack immediately.

Treasure: Each 5-foot section of honeycomb contains approximately 400 pounds of honey, which is worth about 4 cp a pound on the local market. The whole hive contains more than eight tons of honey with a total value of about 650 gp, provided the PCs can find some way to haul all of it out with losing any. If they break in through the north door, they destroy 1,200 pounds of honey and reduce the total value by 48 gp.

G19a. Queen's Lair. The east end of this cave is lined with beeswax cells that contain about forty giant bee pupas and eggs, including three pupas that will become new queens (a new generation in reserve for the spring).

Creatures (EL 3): The giant queen bee rests here with two worker bees always in attendance.

Giant Bees (2): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual,* page 206.

Giant Bee Queen (1): hp 24; *Monster Manual,* page 206. The queen is identical to the other bees except that she can sting more than once.

Tactics: The bees here stay put, even if the bees in area G19 are attacked. If the party attacks the queen without dealing with the bees in area 19 first, the bees rush to defend the queen and her young (this area's high EL reflects the possibility that the party might have to fight all the bees at once).

G20. Hive Entrance. The sinkhole at area G10 drops 20 feet into this cave, forming a funnel-shaped chimney at the point marked "X" on the map.

Sentries from the kobold warband in area G21 stand guard in the southernmost section of the cave, keeping an eye on the giant bees in area G19. A few days ago, the kobolds tried to raid the hive to get at the giant bees' honey but were forced to flee. The kobolds are patiently waiting until their scouts pick off enough giant bees away from the hive to reduce the giant bees' total numbers and allow them to stage their raid.

The bodies of eight kobolds and eight giant bees litter the floor of the chamber—casualties from earlier clashes. The dead kobolds carry nothing of interest.

A 5-foot section of the south wall is made of reinforced masonry, with a crack a little more than 1 foot wide and 4 feet tall. The crack gives access to area G21.

Creatures (EL 1/3): The kobolds keep two sentries posted here. The sentries fix most of their attention on the passages leading to the beehive but can hear anyone attempting to climb down the sinkhole into the chamber. They fire their crossbows at intruders and flee to area G21 at the first opportunity.

Kobolds (2): hp 2 each; *Monster Manual,* page 123.

Development: PCs can climb the gently sloping chimney in the north section of the cave (Climb DC 0) to reach area G10.

G21. Collapsed Hall. The only access to this area is through the crack in the south wall of area G20. Diminutive or Tiny creatures can slip through the crack. Small and Medium-size creatures require a move action to wiggle through. Large creatures must make a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20) to get through, while creatures of Huge size or bigger cannot get through at all. Of course, some creatures can just bash their way through the wall.

Damaged Wall Section: 12 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 162; Break (DC 43). The break DC has been reduced by 2 because the wall is damaged.

Once through the wall, the party can get a look at the area:

> A 10-foot-wide corridor stretches to your left and right. The 15-foot-high vaulted ceiling and walls are covered in smooth plaster. The walls and ceiling are decorated in a continuous mural that seems to depict a woodland at night. Across the hall and a few feet to your right, a door painted dead black breaks the mural. The door has but one decoration: the image of the full moon with a milky white cloud arching overhead.

The corridor is a fragment of an ancient elven tower that fell into ruin long ago. The tower's foundations have settled over the centuries, cracking the wall.

A kobold warband resides here, but they scurry off to hide in areas G21 and G21a if the sentries in area G20 retreat here, or if they hear the party climbing through the crack.

Creatures (EL 4): There are eight kobolds left in the warband, plus one dire weasel and the sentries from area G20. Usually, there are three or four kobolds here. The rest of the warband, along with their dire weasel, is in area G21a. At the first sign of trouble, the kobolds here run west to area G21b and hide in the rubble. The remaining kobolds hide in area G21a, keeping the weasel out of sight around the corner, leaving the corridor empty when foes arrive.

The two groups set up a crossfire against foes coming through the crack. The rubble in areas G21a and G21b gives the kobolds one-half cover.

The kobolds hold back the dire weasel until the enemy closes to melee range with the one group or the other. Since they have no retreat, they fight to the death unless they can break away and run back out the crack to area G20. Kobolds who manage to escape flee into the woods, never to return.

Kobolds (8): hp 2 each; *Monster Manual,* page 123.

Dire Weasel (1): hp 19; *Monster Manual,* page 56.

Development: The trap protecting area G22 poses some danger to PCs here, as they can trigger it by touching the door or the wall near it. If anyone triggers the trap or starts fiddling around with the door (picking the lock, trying to remove the trap, or the like), the ghost from area G22 appears and demands to know what they're doing.

Captured kobolds tell the PCs about their plan to loot the giant beehive at area G19. They offer to reveal a secret in return for their freedom: the existence of the trap on the door to area G22. Several kobolds died trying to open the door. "It is death to touch the door," claim the kobolds.

G21a. Kobold Den. The kobold warband has chosen this partially collapsed chamber as their temporary lair. The west wall is largely intact and has frescoes similar to the mural in area G21, except that they show a forest in daylight. The remaining walls are just jumbles of dirt and rubble.

The area contains numerous piles of twigs and leaves that the kobolds use for bedding, the remains of a couple of campfires, an old iron pot, other personal gear, and one prisoner.

Creatures (EL —): The prisoner is a 1st-level half-orc warrior named Udbul (use the half-orc Zhent raider statistics in the "Random Encounters" section for Udbul). He was part of Zhent raiding party that encountered the pseudodragon from area G8 one night. When someone spotted the pseudodragon and started firing arrows, it stung Udbul and fled. The half-orc failed both saving throws against the creature's venom. In the confusion, the other raiders failed to notice that Udbul had fallen and moved on, leaving him snoozing on the forest floor. Before the night was done, kobold scouts found Udbul and dragged him here. The kobolds have not been gentle with their prisoner—they stripped him of his gear and forced him to steal honey from the beehive at area G19. He actually succeeded in getting some, but now he lies tied up on a bed of leaves, his Constitution score reduced to 5 from bee stings. He currently has 3 hit points (9 maximum).

Udbul is willing to talk with anyone who frees him from the kobolds. He readily admits to being a Zhent raider. He knows about the portal at area G11 and does his best to direct the PCs to it. He knows that triggering the portal requires placing one's left palm on it, and thinks (correctly) that the eye tattoos worn by the officers and spellcasters in the raiding parties have something to do with the portal (see area G11 for details).

Udbul also tells the party that the portal leads to a small, isolated citadel with a fairly small garrison (he's not sure how many). See the "Captured Zhents" section for details.

Treasure: The kobolds have nothing of real value, but the PCs can claim a bounty on Udbul.

Development: The kobolds take cover in the rubble and fire on anyone entering area **G21**; see that area for details.

G21b. Staircase. This staircase once led to the upper portions of the elven tower, but the tower is gone and the stairs are blocked with rubble. If the PCs probe the rubble, they find it all stuck fast. The best and the worst they can do is to get a face full of dirt and rock dust.

Development: The kobolds from area **G21** run here to hide in the rubble when trouble threatens; see that area for details.

G22. Funerary Chapel. The stone door to this room is locked and painted glossy black. It bears the symbol of Sehanine Moonbow (a full moon with an opaque, milky crescent), the elven goddess of death, journeys, and the moon. It also has a **Trap** placed on it.

Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 45); Open Lock (DC 25).

Trap (EL 7): The room's north door (and the 10-foot section surrounding it) bears an effect that duplicates those of a *forbiddance* spell cast at 13th level. Touching the door or the wall, or attempting to pass through them, triggers the effect.

***Forbiddance* Ward:** CR 7; chaotic good creatures can pass without harm; lawful good and neutral good creatures are blocked and suffer 3d6 points of damage; neutral creatures and creatures of any evil alignment are blocked and suffer 6d6 points of damage. A successful Will save (DC 19) negates both effects; once a creature fails a save, it can never pass through the ward but can attempt saving throws to avoid damage; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31); clerics of Sehanine Moonbow and members of the Kelerandri elf family can safely pass the ward no matter what their alignment.

Once the PCs get by the door, they can enter the room:

> This irregularly shaped chamber has walls decorated with sylvan scenes. Trails wind through the trees, slowly vanishing in the distance. Daises to the left and right have copper braziers whose legs resemble twining vines rooted in the stone. The metal is well crusted with verdigris, making the braziers look even more organic. A steady flame burns in each, lighting the chamber.
>
> Directly ahead of you, an 8-foot-diameter image of the full moon with a milky white cloud arching overhead is carved in low relief on the wall. The moon and cloud gleam with silver. Immediately below the relief lies a fountain with three jets of water bubbling merrily.

The braziers have *continual flame* spells cast on them. Their legs are indeed rooted in the daises. They serve as levers to open the secret door behind them. When someone tilts a brazier toward the center of the room, the secret door behind it opens. The relief on the wall looks silver but is merely painted in silver leaf. It cannot be removed without destroying it.

Stone Secret Doors: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 30).

Creatures (EL 9): Any attempt to damage the room or its contents rouses the chamber's guardian, as does opening either secret door. The ghost of Lyklor Kelerandri vowed to protect his family from harm through the ages, and the strength of his vow has kept his spirit close by through the centuries. Lyklor's occasional perambulations near the keep gave rise to tales about Galath's ghost. The tales were right about the ghost but wrong about its identity.

Lyklor appears as an elf knight clad head to toe in gleaming plate armor. He has a shield bearing the Kelerandri family arms: two golden, rearing stags on a field of blue. He carries a bastard sword and has a composite longbow and a quiver of arrows strapped to his back.

Lyklor Kelerandri, Male Moon Elf Ghost Ftr7: CR 9; Medium-size Undead (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 7d12; hp 88; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 12 (+1 Dex, +1 deflection), or 21 (+1 Dex, +8 full plate, +2 large shield); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d10+4/crit 19-20, masterwork bastard sword), +9/+4 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3, masterwork mighty composite longbow); SA manifestation, frightful moan, malevolence; SQ moon elf (see *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*), undead, +4 turn resistance, rejuvenation; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 13, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills: Climb +0, Jump +0, Listen +2, Ride +5, Spot +2; *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Initiative, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Possessions: Full plate, masterwork bastard sword, masterwork mighty composite longbow [+2] with 20 arrows, platinum pendant set with diamonds (2,000 gp).

Special: See page 212-213 in the *Monster Manual* for information on ghost special attacks and qualities.

Tactics: When responding to vandalism in the room, Lyklor uses his frightful moan. PCs who fail their saves must flee the room. The ward does not harm them on the way out, but they must save again if they try to return. After moaning, Lyklor uses malevolence against the strongest-looking character who remains. If he succeeds, he uses whatever weapons the PC carries to make subdual attacks (he doesn't want to spatter the chapel with blood) against any other foes. If the malevolence attack fails, Lyklor tries it against each other foe in turn. If he fails to possess anyone, he leaves the chamber and possesses a giant bee from area **G19** or any other convenient creature. He does not relent until he drives off all intruders. While Lyklor possesses a creature, it has his alignment and identity and can freely pass through the ward guarding the chamber.

If responding to a secret door opening, he greets the PCs cordially but wants to know what they're doing here. Lyklor has no intention of letting adventurers poke around his family's burial place.

Development: PCs with the Knowledge (nobility and royalty) or Knowledge (heraldry) skill might recognize Lyklor's coat of arms (DC 20). If someone recognizes the symbol, Lyklor is impressed and chats with the party for awhile. He's particularly interested in anything the party might be able to tell him about the present fortunes of the Kelerandri family. A DC 20 Knowledge (nobility and royalty) or Knowledge (history) check reveals that most of The kelerandris joined the Elven Retreat, but some are returning now. In return, Lyklor can tell the PCs all about the keep. He knows about the treasure hidden in area **G18** but is reluctant to mention it for fear of bringing treasure hunters to the keep. If the party really impresses him (with a successful Diplomacy check against Lyklor's Sense Motive check at +5) or if they tell him drow are lurking about, he'll tell the PCs how to find the treasure.

Lyklor notices attempts to force the door from area **G21**. He manifests in area **G21** and demands to know what the PCs are doing. If the PCs attack, Lyklor uses the **Tactics** above. If the PCs parley, Lyklor talks for a while but is suspicious and eventually tries to drive them off unless the PCs impress him as described above. Note that the *forbiddance* ward blocks ethereal and astral travel, so Lyklor cannot pass through when ethereal or incorporeal, but he can simply go around the ward. (He can pass through the ward while he occupies a physical body.)

G23. Crypt. This chamber holds Lyklor Kelerandri's tomb. The room is dominated by a massive sarcophagus made of green marble with the likeness of Lyklor reclining on the top, sword on his breast, bow and arrows at his side, and his shield serving as a pillow.

Stone Sarcophagus: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 30). Pushing off the sarcophagus' lid requires a successful Strength check (DC 20).

Treasure: Inside the sarcophagus lie Lyklor's bones and all the equipment mentioned in his statistics (see area **G22**). The metal items are slightly corroded but still serviceable.

G24. Catacombs. This area consists of a hallway lined with six statues of elf warriors. The alcoves on the north and south walls contain low daises. The walls of each alcove contain slabs of green granite that mark burials. There are anywhere from four to 32 burials in each alcove. Smashing through the slabs reveals coffins behind them. Each coffin contains an elf body and a small assortment of personal trinkets. If the PCs loot the whole area, they find three pieces of jewelry (50 gp each).

The room at the end of hall holds four sarcophagi similar to the one in area **G23**. None of the bodies has anything valuable.

This whole area has received a permanent *hallow* spell and is guarded by a *magic circle against evil* effect. All Charisma checks to turn undead gain a +4 holy bonus, and Charisma checks to command undead suffer a -4 holy penalty. (The turning bonus also applies to turn attempts made against Lyklor Kelerandri.) The skeletal remains in this area cannot be turned into undead creatures.

Stone Burial Slabs: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 30).

Moving On

Once the PCs have explored the keep, they can seek adventure elsewhere or they can attempt to use the portal at area **G11** to move on to the next part of the adventure. Jarrod (see the "Riders of Mistledale" timed encounter) can both encourage the PCs to take the next step and advise them against doing anything foolish. For example, Jarrod can point out that Mistledale's defenders are busy dealing with the drow right now and don't have the wherewithal to attack the Zhents.

On the other hand, Jarrod also points out that it would be best to go through the portal near dawn, when the raiders normally use it. If the PCs don't think of it themselves, Jarrod suggests that the party join forces with his patrol and lie in wait for the next party of raiders to approach. The combined group can ambush the raiders (use the statistics from the Zhent Raiding Party random encounter), and then the party can use the portal. If the PCs agree to this plan (or they propose it themselves), Jarrod secures two *potions of cure light wounds* for each PC.

PART TWO: RAIDERS' CITADEL

The Zhents carved this small keep out of the top of a free-standing stone bluff. It is located in the Stormhorn Mountains about halfway between Darkhold and Shadowdale. The keep looks like a big rock from the air, and thus far nobody but the Zhentarim know of its existence.

The citadel serves as a base for raiders who are harassing the Dales. One-way portals on the citadel's lower level lead to various places in the Dales. Other portals scattered across the Dales lead back here, but lie outside the citadel (a security precaution).

Nearly all the citadel's residents are out raiding at any given time, leaving only a small garrison behind (the Zhents are confident that the citadel will remain a secret for a long time). The raiders return here after each raid, pausing only long enough to rest and receive healing spells before going on another raid or moving on to other duty in the Zhent army. An assignment to a raiding party is coveted, because raiders get a share of the profits.

The raiders dump their loot here between raids, shipping it off to Darkhold once a month via a portal. Some forms of loot, particularly captured animals, go overland to Darkhold, though most animals are simply slaughtered to feed the troops.

Citadel Features

The Zhents cut most of the citadel out of solid rock, taking advantage of natural chambers and corridors where possible.

Walls: Unless otherwise noted, areas inside the citadel have masonry walls 6 inches thick. Areas hewn from solid rock have walls, ceilings, and floors lined with 6 inches of masonry. The masonry is new and in good condition. Their Climb DC is 15.

Ceilings and Floors: Ceilings are 8 feet high in corridors and 10 feet high in rooms unless otherwise noted. The floor surfaces are smooth enough to run across without difficulty.

Doors: Unless noted otherwise, doors inside the citadel are strong wooden doors (see Table 4-4 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). All open easily unless locked.

Doors open out (away from their rooms), with the hinges on the left as one faces the doors from outside.

Once opened, doors tend to swing shut after 1d4 rounds and latch. The party can wedge a door open by placing a spike, stake, or similar tapered object under the door. Openings with no doors indicated are simply rectangular apertures.

Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 20).

Secret Doors: The citadel's secret doors are stone. They are always locked.

Stone Doors: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 20).

Arrow Slits: These give creatures behind them nine-tenths cover, granting a +10 AC bonus and a +4 Reflex save bonus (half damage on a failed save, no damage on a successful save).

Fireplaces: The citadel has several fireplaces for heating and cooking. The fires, which are nearly smokeless and won't reveal the citadel's location, burn day and night to drive away the citadel's damp chill.

The fireplaces are about 4 feet high and 4 feet deep. The width varies as shown on the citadel maps. Each fireplace has a chimney about a foot square and 25 to 50 feet long. The

chimneys are fitted with steel grates (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 30) at the tops and bottoms. These keep creatures from sneaking in or out through the chimneys. Each chimney top is also disguised to look like natural stone. Diminutive creatures could slip past the grates, but exhaust from the fires fills the chimney with heat and fumes. There is no breathable air in a chimney, and creatures inside suffer 5 points of heat damage each round.

Environment

The Zhents built the citadel quickly, and not for comfort.

Air Quality: The citadel is poorly ventilated; the air is stale and foul, though safe to breathe. Masses of smoke, such as from a smokestick, take 10 minutes to dissipate unless there is a fireplace or arrow slit within the area filled with smoke, in which case the smoke dissipates in 1 minute.

Light: Unless otherwise noted, the Zhents have placed *continual flame* spells in all corridors and chambers. There is one *continual flame* for each 20 feet of corridor or 20- by 20-foot section of chamber. Each *continual flame* is carried on an iron bar fitted with a cap that can be closed to douse the light.

The 5-foot-wide corridor that connects the citadel's arrow slits has no *continual flame* spells, but the arrow slits admit light, giving the arrow slits and connecting corridor illumination about equal to moonlight during the day. This dims to darkness about 1 hour before sunset and remains so until about 1 hour before sunrise.

Noise: Loud noises echo throughout most of the citadel. However, they can be hard to identify, especially if the smith in area **R12a** is working. Furthermore, most of the citadel's residents are asleep or just not paying a great deal of attention, and it can take them a few moments to realize anything is amiss. The **Development** section of each encounter area details the occupants' reactions to disturbances.

Temperature: The citadel's interior is chilly and damp, especially in the late autumn when this adventure takes place. PCs without cold weather gear feel distinctly uncomfortable and must make Fortitude saving throws (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage each hour.

Running the Citadel

The encounter descriptions that follow assume business as usual at the citadel. The Zhents are confident that the citadel's location—indeed its very existence—is a secret. Because the garrison is not expecting an attack, the troops are more concerned with resting and keeping warm than being prepared for trouble.

There are two shifts of guards. The night shift (shift A) consists mostly of half-orcs. The day shift (shift B) consists mostly of humans. Guards on duty can be found at each of the following areas: **R2**, **R4**, **R13**, **R19**, **R22**, **R27**, and **R28**. When guards in an area are attacked, assume that guards in adjacent areas hear and respond within 1d4 rounds. Once guards in adjacent areas are aware of an attack, one guard runs to inform the captain, and the rest go to the aid of their companions. The same behavior is true of other NPCs within the keep, with the exception of Jebalek (this is explained in area **R12a**) and the prisoners of the Zhents (who are hoping for rescue).

Off-duty guards can be found in the mess hall at dawn, noon, and dusk. Other times they tend to stick to their barracks in area **R28**.

When the smith is working, his hammering can be clearly heard in areas **R2-R6** and areas **R9-R14**, and in the corridors connecting those areas.

Denizens of the Citadel

Due to the keep's nature as a base for raiding parties, many of the inhabitants are in and out. When the PCs decide to attack the keep, however, use the following information in conjunction with each room's description to keep track of each NPCs movements.

Commander Suddilis: The citadel commander spends most of his time in his chamber (area **R24b**). If Captain Malvina is slain or captured and her forces are in danger of losing the citadel, Suddilis summons a cleric assistant and his loyal imp, Xthraxix, and makes a stand in the chapel (area **R25**). At your discretion, the PCs might also encounter the commander elsewhere, as he has free reign to go where he pleases.

Captain Malvina: Malvina patrols the entire keep during the day. When and where the PCs encounter her is up to you. Here are some general guidelines: If you want to keep things simple, Malvina can be found in her room (area **R18g**) at all times. Otherwise, in the morning hours, she can be found in areas **R2**, **R5**, **R6**, **R7**, **R9**, **R10**, **R11**, **R12**, **R14**, or **R18**. In the afternoon, she can be found inspecting areas **R19**, **R20**, **R22**, **R24b** (in council with Suddilis), **R26**, **R27**, or **R28**. At night, she sleeps in her room, and her statistics can be found in the description of area **R18g**.

Guard Sergeants: Four guard sergeants (2 humans, 2 half-orcs) live in areas **R26a-b**. A human and a half-orc share each room. The half-orc sergeants serve with the night guard shift. The human sergeants serve with the day guard shift.

Lieutenants: Captain Malvina has three lieutenants (Laskur, Rogg, and Uwna) who inhabit areas **R18d**, **R18e**, and **R18f**. One lieutenant leads each party of Zhent raiders. It is possible, even likely, that the PCs will face and defeat one or more of the lieutenants before reaching the Citadel.

Wizards: Three wizards live at the citadel. The head wizard, Yvan, occupies area **R18a** and seldom stirs from there. The other two wizards accompany the raiding parties and share the raiders' schedule. This means that whenever the PCs raid the keep, only one wizard assistant will be present.

Reba: Yvan's black cat familiar spends most of her time sleeping in Yvan's room (area **R18a**), but she accompanies Yvan whenever he leaves the chamber. From time to time, she leaves the room on her own and prowls the Citadel. For each hour Yvan is in his room, roll 1d10 to check Reba's location:

Roll 1d10	Reba's Location
1	Hunting rats in area **R10**
2	Laying in front of the fire in area **R14**
3	Pestering the cooks in area **R15** for scraps
4-10	Sleeping in area **R18a**

Remember that Reba and Yvan are telepathically linked. What one discovers, the other knows.

Clerics: Suddilis, the citadel commander, has three cleric assistants who occupy areas **R24a** and **R24c**. One assistant accompanies each party of Zhent raiders. The remaining cleric assists Suddilis and can usually be found with him. This means that whenever the PCs raid the keep, only two cleric assistants will be present.

Xthraxix: Xthraxix the imp serves as Suddilis' bodyguard and advisor. Most of the time, the imp accompanies the commander. Each hour, roll 1d10 to determine what the imp is doing.

Roll 1d10	Xthraxix's Location
1	Taking a nap in the brazier in Suddilis's room (area **R18g**)
2	Laying in front of the fire in area **R14**
3	Tormenting thee prisoners in area **R22**
4-10	With Suddilis (see above)

Captured Zhents

If the PCs take any of the citadel's guards or officers prisoner, they can question them. Most prisoners readily answer a few questions, and the most common answers the PCs are likely to get appear below:

- "We are a Zhentarim outpost waging war on the enemies of Zhentil Keep. We can strike anywhere, anytime."
- "How many troops are here? I've never counted them all." This is basically true. There are 63 Zhents in the citadel, plus five servants (one servant is a Zhent in disguise), plus the kennel keeper and the smith. Only Suddilis, the other officers, and the sergeants are aware of the exact headcount, however.
- "Our commander is Suddilis, high priest of Bane." Suddilis is a low-level cleric, but he has impressed his underlings.

It takes a successful Bluff or Intimidate roll to get any other information (+5 to the opposing Sense Motive check). Each successful roll can reveal the following:

- "Parties of raiders leave the citadel every night through magic portals on the lower level." Note that most of the troops don't know how the portals are activated.
- "Prisoners are held on the lower level, just off the main stairs."
- "A pit in the chapel holds terrible monsters. Suddilis keeps them fed with the bodies of prisoners he sacrifices." Nobody knows when Suddilis will take his next sacrifice (because Bane worshipers have no set calendar of holy days or celebrations). The guards and the raiders know the approximate population of prisoners: a few humans, an elf, a drow, and a goody-two-shoes paladin.
- "In addition to the warriors of the garrison, there are a few wizards and clerics, plus Suddilis's shapechanging pet and two nasty wolves." The "pet" is Xthraxix the imp. Various people have seen Xthraxix as a tiny devil and as a black cat. The "nasty wolves" are the fiendish wolves in area **R7**. The troops find them "nasty" because they have eerie eyes and a peculiar smell about them. The spellcasters in the citadel know they're fiendish wolves.

A few of the citadel's residents know less about what's going on. See the various encounter locations for details.

Keyed Encounters (Areas R1–R28)

The description for each location includes the creatures most often found there. Many of these locations may contain different numbers of creatures, depending on the time of day.

R1. Arrival Area. The PCs arrive here after they locate and use the portal in Galath's Roost. The area marked with an "X" indicates where the portal deposits travelers. The first PC to use the portal appears in the square marked "X", while all the other PCs appear in adjacent squares.

RAISING THE ALARM

The Zhents don't just sit in their rooms waiting for the party to come and kill them. When anyone spots intruders inside the citadel, somebody goes off in search of Malvina, the captain of the garrison, or Suddilis, the citadel commander. Both NPCs' schedules are fairly well known, and finding one or the other takes only a minute or two. Likewise, any dead bodies left behind will be discovered when the guard changes, when the captain comes to make an inspection, or when the slain Zhents don't show up for a meal.

Once word of an intrusion reaches the leaders, Malvina gathers a lieutenant, the wizard Yvan (from area **R18a**), and five off-duty guards near area **R13**. Then she goes to meet the intruders. Other off-duty guards are dispatched to cover losses at the various guardposts in the citadel.

Murzim, the kennel keeper (see area **R8**), is instructed to take his fiendish wolves from area **R7** and join the guards there. Meanwhile, Suddilis takes an assistant, his imp bodyguard, and two off-duty raiders and prepares to make a last stand in the chapel (area **R25**).

If the party begins to get the upper hand, surviving Zhents join Suddilis in the chapel to make a last stand.

The party's first task is to get into the citadel, which is best accomplished through guile (though a strong or lucky party could fight their way in). The EL listed for this encounter assumes the PCs fight their way in quickly. It is possible that the party could face the entire garrison right here if they get involved in a long fight. Most parties will be forced to withdraw if that happens.

You are transported to a windswept cliff. The clifftop, bare and stony, stretches away to the west. To the east, a bluff of solid rock rises up before you. A narrow tongue of natural stone connects the cliff where you stand to an opening in the flank of the higher bluff. Beyond a 10-foot-wide crevasse, immediately inside the opening, is a wooden bridge attached to various levers and pulleys. The bridge is fitted with an elaborate system of levers and cogs, with chains running from the mechanism into the bluff's walls.

The bluff sports paired arrow slits to the left and right of the opening. Two pairs of sentries keep watch from behind natural battlements above the arrow slits.

The clifftop on which the PCs appear is about 30 feet high, with sheer rock walls. The base is rocky, except for area **R1a**. The uneven, natural stone surface of the clifftop prevents running or charging.

The Zhents carved out the chasm that separates this area from area **R2**, but it looks like a natural feature. The chasm is 10 feet wide and 20 feet deep. It is possible to climb down into the crevasse and up the other side (Climb DC 15), or to simply jump the crevasse.

The wooden bridge swings up and out to span the crevasse, but its mechanism can only be worked from area **R3**.

Creatures (EL 6): Eight guards keep watch over this area. Two are posted at area **R2**, four watch from the battlements (two on each side; see area **R28s** and **R28b**), and two are stationed behind the arrow slits to the north (see area **R4**).

If a fight breaks out here, the guards on the battlements and at the arrow slits fire their bows. The battlements are 25 feet higher than the rest of the citadel. Add 5 feet to the range for any ranged attack made from the battlement to area **R1**, or vice versa. The guards at area **R2** fire their crossbows.

Development: The PCs must defeat the guards quickly or the entire citadel will be alerted. See the "Raising the Alarm" sidebar for details. If the PCs successfully bluff their way past the guards, the guards promptly forget about them—at least until someone else raises the alarm.

GETTING INSIDE

The guards watching the citadel's entrance immediately spot visible PCs arriving through the portal at area **R1**. They are accustomed to seeing raiding parties returning this way and do not pay much attention to the PCs unless they look or behave suspiciously. They do not notice invisible PCs coming through the portal unless they make a great deal of noise, such as falling into the crevasse or conducting a protracted argument about what to do next.

The guards expect to see 6-8 human and half-orc raiders (casualties among raiders do occur) clad in light armor and wearing dark cloaks returning with their warhorse mounts, loot, and perhaps some prisoners. The guards on the battlements give such groups a hearty hello, exchange a few words, and then shout for the guards at area **R2** to swing the bridge into place.

The PCs stand a good chance of bluffing their way into the citadel, though they'll probably need to make a successful Bluff check to get past the guards here without a fight. Use the following guidelines to determine difficulty:

- The PCs look like raiders if they have at least one mount each. Any Medium-size character can look just like a raider by donning a cloak taken from a raider; since the guards are a fair distance away and not paying attention, the "disguise" automatically works. Gnome and halfling PCs can avoid arousing suspicion if they appear as prisoners. If the party looks and acts like returning raiders, they can pass the guards without a Bluff check.
- If PCs look like raiders but don't quite act right (they arrive with no mounts, look confused about where they are, or make similar lapses), they must make a Bluff check to get into the citadel without a fight. The guards, however, suffer a -5 penalty to their Sense Motive check. Make one Bluff check for the whole party (using the party's best Bluff score) and one Sense Motive check for the guards.
- If the party looks only somewhat like a raiding party (gnomes or halflings who don't seem to be prisoners, no mounts with the party, PCs wearing heavy armor not hidden under raiders' cloaks, or similar discrepancies), the guards get +5 to their Sense Motive check.
- If the party looks nothing like a raiding party, the guards get +10 to their Sense Motive check.
- If the PCs look nothing like a raiding party and appear hostile, or if they look like a band of crusading adventurers (displaying symbols of good deities, for example), the guards get +20 to their Sense Motive check.
- The party gets a +5 to their Bluff check if they bring along a captured raider and convince the prisoner (perhaps by virtue of a *charm person* spell) to speak for them.

R1a. Trash Heaps. The Zhents have been dumping their trash right out their front door. The heaps are only a few feet thick, but they provide fairly soft surfaces that can cushion landings (see "Falling" on page 112 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*.)

R2. Guardpost. The portcullis is usually raised, as the guards don't care to operate it every time someone passes by. Since this is the only real entrance to the citadel, the area sees quite a bit of traffic—mostly cooks and servants throwing trash onto the trash heaps (area **R1a**).

Creatures (EL 2): Two elite human guards keep watch here day and night.

As a matter of procedure, the guards lower the portcullis before swinging the bridge at area **R1** into place. Even if the party has successfully bluffed their way past the guards at area **R1**, they'll need to do some fast talking or cast a few spells to get by here.

The guards scrutinize anyone coming in from the outside (they might have been bored before the party arrived, but they're alert after fiddling with the bridge and the portcullis). The guards make a Spot check to notice something amiss. Make one Spot check for the guards and a Disguise check for the party (assuming they are making some attempt to look and act like they belong here). The party gets a +5 to their Disguise check if they have donned raiders' cloaks.

If the guards make a successful Spot check, they ask who the PCs are and what they're doing here. The PCs can bluff the guards by explaining that they're just back from a raid and grabbed some new equipment, or by claiming to be Zhent generals here to make a surprise inspection, or some similar story. Make a Bluff check for the party and give the guards a +5 on their Sense Motive check. If the Bluff fails, one of the guards steps back to ready an attack with a longspear while the other runs east to find Malvina, the captain of the garrison.

Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 8 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (scale mail, base 30 ft.); AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Atk +2 melee (1d8/crit ×3, longspear), or +1 ranged (1d10/crit 19-20, heavy crossbow); AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +0, Listen +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Tactics: In a fight, the guards lower the portcullis, giving them one-half cover (+4 AC bonus and a +2 Reflex save bonus). The portcullis has a hardness of 5, 30 hit points, and a break DC of 25. It weighs 300 pounds and does not lock when dropped. A PC with a Strength score of 18 can take a full-round action to lift it clear. Two or more characters whose maximum heavy loads (see Table 9-1 in the *Player's Handbook*) total 300 pounds or more can accomplish the same stunt.

The guards fire their crossbows at the first enemy they see. After the initial volley, one guard runs east to find the captain while the other reloads. If anyone approaches the portcullis, the remaining guard steps back 5 feet and attacks though the portcullis with a longspear.

Development: The guards here notice any disturbance or fighting at area **R1** unless someone casts a *silence* spell into the corridor leading here. Even then, the guards will see PCs crossing in front of the opening leading from area **R1**. Upon noting trouble, the guards lower the portcullis and stand ready to defend it with their heavy crossbows.

If one of the guards escapes from a fight here, the guard goes to find Captain Malvina. In any case, the troops at areas R5 and R6 investigate any disturbance. They raise the general alarm themselves if they find anything amiss.

The guards tend to stick to their posts and ignore other events in the complex. If they hear any prolonged loud noise (such as combat in areas R5, R6, or R9), they drop the portcullis and send one guard to investigate after 1d4+1 rounds. If that guard fails to return in 5 minutes, the remaining guard raises the alarm.

R3. Winch Rooms. These small chambers contain machinery for working the bridge at area R1 and portcullis at area R2. The north room contains the bridge machinery, while the south room contains the portcullis machinery.

Each set of machinery consists of a metal winch set into the chamber's west wall. Each winch is fitted with a ratchet mechanism and is connected via loops of chain to sets of counterweights buried behind the wall. The winches operate the counterweights, which in turn work the features to which they are connected. It takes a successful Strength check (DC 10) to turn a winch in either direction.

R4. Arrow Slits. A guard stands at each of these locations. All the guards focus on what (if anything) is going on outside the citadel and won't notice anyone coming unless they're making a lot of noise (arguing, running in armor, or the like) or using a *daylight* spell.

Guards caught unawares are startled and swing away from the arrow slits with a jolt. They relax when they see that the newcomers are not officers or sergeants. They ignore people who merely walk past, but they scrutinize anyone who lingers in the area.

Creatures (EL 2): Human guards are posted here during the day, half-orcs at night. The guards have strict orders not to show light near the arrow slits at night, and they know the PCs are intruders if they use lights at night.

Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2): hp 8 each; see area R2 for complete statistics.

Zhent Guards, Half-Orc War1 (2): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 8 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (scale mail, base 30 ft.); AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Atk +3 melee (1d12+3/crit ×3, greataxe), or +1 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, short bow); SQ darkvision 60 feet; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +2; Spot +2; *Feats:* Alertness.

Tactics: Guards who become suspicious of the PCs for any reason do not attack if they are outnumbered. Instead, they pretend not to notice anything is amiss, then run for area R5, R6, or R14, whichever is closest.

The guards fire their bows at anyone outside the citadel whom they recognize as intruders, but they are not likely to notice anything wrong unless the guards on the battlements (areas R28a and R28b) raise the alarm or a fight breaks out for some other reason.

R5. North Barracks. This room serves as quarters for six raiders. Not all of them are present all the time, as noted under **Creatures** below.

A spiral staircase winds upward from the chamber's northwest corner. A bank of red coals burns inside a fireplace in the southwest corner, and an open barrel heaped with lumps of charcoal stands nearby.

A tier of bunks three long and three high rests along the east wall. All the beds have thick covers but look rumpled and dirty. They smell worse; the scent of unwashed bodies lies thick in here. A battered table with a few chairs stands near the room's center, and a sturdy rack for holding armor fills the south wall to the left of the fireplace.

The raiders spend most of their off-duty hours here, resting, playing knucklebones, or maintaining their equipment.

Creatures (EL 4): This is where the raiders stay when they aren't raiding. If the PCs enter without having raised the alarm yet, three raiders are sleeping and the rest are gambling or cleaning their weapons and armor. All of these raiders are out of their armor, but they keep their weapons handy. Sleeping raiders wake at the first sound of combat in the room.

Zhent Raiders, Human War1 (4): hp 9 each; see the "Random Encounters" section for complete statistics.

Zhent Raiders, Half-Orc War1 (2): hp 9 each; see the "Random Encounters" section for complete statistics.

Tactics: Raiders who are awake might hear the party approaching, but if the alarm has not been raised they assume that the PCs are fellow denizens of the citadel just passing by, at least until the characters come into view.

The raiders realize the party doesn't belong here, but if the PCs have gotten this far without fighting anyone, they have the same chance to bluff their way past this area as they had to get past area R2. If the PCs are revealed as intruders, the raiders attack. Raiders who began the encounter awake move to block the party's access to the chamber, but they attack normally. Sleeping raiders take 1 round to wake up. They attempt grappling attacks against the PCs, as they don't relish a stand-up fight without their armor.

If the alarm has been raised, all raiders are awake, and one raider watches each entrance to the room. They fire arrows at any stranger who approaches and switch to melee weapons if the foe comes within reach.

Development: Awake raiders notice any loud disturbance in area R2. Once alerted, they wake their comrades and go to investigate. Sleeping raiders arise in 2 rounds and don their armor hastily, which takes 5 rounds.

Treasure: Each raider has a padlocked chest kept underneath the bottom tier of bunks. (There also are some well-used chamber pots under the bunks.) The chests hold assorted personal gear and adventuring equipment, plus some personal treasure totaling eighteen 10-gp gems (a mixture of garnets and moss agates) and 450 gp.

Wooden Chests: 1 in thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Break (DC 18); Open Lock (DC 20).

R6. South Barracks. This room serves as quarters for six raiders. It is identical to area R5, only the layout differs (bunks against the south wall, weapon rack on the west wall).

Creatures (EL 4): If the PCs enter without having raised the alarm yet, three raiders are sleeping and the rest are gambling or cleaning their weapons and armor. All of these raiders are out of their armor but keep their weapons handy. Sleeping raiders wake at the first sound of combat in the room.

Zhent Raiders, Human War1 (2): hp 9 each; see the "Random Encounters" section for complete statistics.

Zhent Raiders, Half-Orc War1 (4): hp 9 each; see the "Random Encounters" section for complete statistics.

Tactics: This raiders respond exactly as those in area **R5**.

R7. Kennel. This room has a locked iron door.

Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 20).

This chamber is cool and dark. Despite the chill, it reeks of brimstone mixed with even less wholesome scents. Bits of offal and splinted bone litter the floor. The chamber's west wall is set with five stone rings, each spaced roughly 5 feet apart. The only visible exit is a wooden door in the east wall. This door has a small, square grate, about as big as a human hand, set at about eye height for a human.

A pair of gaunt canines sit huddled in the southwest corner. Rusty chains run from their greasy leather collars to the two southernmost stone rings.

The Zhents originally built the chamber as a kennel for a pack of hell hounds, but so far they've had to settle for a pair of fiendish wolves. The stone loops are for chaining the animals in place.

Creatures (EL 2): The Zhents keep two fiendish wolves here to serve as guard animals and to make their raids a little more terrifying. When locked in here, they're kept chained to the south wall.

At night the dogs' trainer, Murzim, is here working with the beasts (see area **R8** for Murzim's statistics).

Fiendish Wolves (2): CR 1; Medium-size Magical Beast; HD 2d8+4; hp 12, 14; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite); SA smite good, trip; SQ scent, cold and fire resistance 5, darkvision 60 feet, SR 4; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +1*; Feats: Weapon Finesse (bite).

*Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

SA—Smite Good: Once per day, a fiendish wolf can deal an extra +2 damage to a good creature.

Tactics: The wolves' collars and chains are a ruse. They're real, but the collars tear away whenever the wolves put the slightest strain on them. The wolves are just canny enough to play the role of neglected pets. They wait until foes come within reach, then attack, using their smite good power immediately.

Development: The wolves snarl and howl loudly while fighting. If the iron door is closed, the noise is audible at areas **R2**, **R5**, and **R6**. The guards at area **R2** stay at their posts, but the raiders at areas **R5** and **R6** investigate after 1d4 rounds. The kennel keeper at area **R8** hears any disturbance here after 1d3 rounds, promptly changes to hybrid form, and rushes out to save his charges.

R8. Kennel Keeper's Room. The door to this chamber has a small grate, about 6 inches square and about 5 feet off the floor. The kennel keeper uses it to keep an eye on the wolves.

The room is dark and furnished with a simple bed, a charcoal brazier for heat, several pegs for hanging equipment, and a sturdy wooden chest with a padded top that doubles as a seat. The ceiling is exceptionally high (30 feet) and fitted with a copper lattice equipped with hooks for hanging meat and game. A variety of carcasses hang from here (food for the wolves). A 20-foot pole with an iron hook stands in the room's northeast corner. The kennel keeper, a werewolf named Murzim, uses the hook to get at the meat stored overhead.

During the day, Murzim can be found here. During the night, he rises and works with the wolves in area **R7**.

Creatures (EL 3): Murzim's human ancestors hail from Calimshan, and he has a touch of efreeti blood, giving him a decidedly coppery complexion in human form. He has reddish fur when in wolf or hybrid form.

Murzim is a worshiper of Malar. Suddilis, the citadel commander, resents Murzim for not being a follower of Bane and would gladly sacrifice the werewolf if he ever got wind of his activities.

Murzim, Male Werewolf Exp1: CR 3; Medium-size Shapechanger; AL CE; three alternate forms.

Human form: HD 2d8+2; hp 14; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +2 leather, +2 natural); Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, club), or +2 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SQ +2 to saving throws against fire, wolf empathy; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +4, Handle Animal +4, Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Open Locks +6, Search +10, Spot +8. *Feats:* Bloodline of Fire, Improved Control Shape.

Hybrid form: HD 2d8+6; hp 22; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft.; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +2 leather, +4 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, bite), or +5 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA curse of lycanthropy, trip; SQ +2 to saving throws against fire, wolf empathy, scent, damage reduction 15/silver; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +4, Handle Animal +4, Hide +9, Intimidate +4, Listen +12, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +9, Search +14, Spot +12, Wilderness Lore +1*. *Feats:* Bloodline of Fire, Blind-Fight, Improved Control Shape, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (bite).

*Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Wolf form: As hybrid form, except AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), no ranged attack, and Murzim can't use his Open Lock skill while in wolf form.

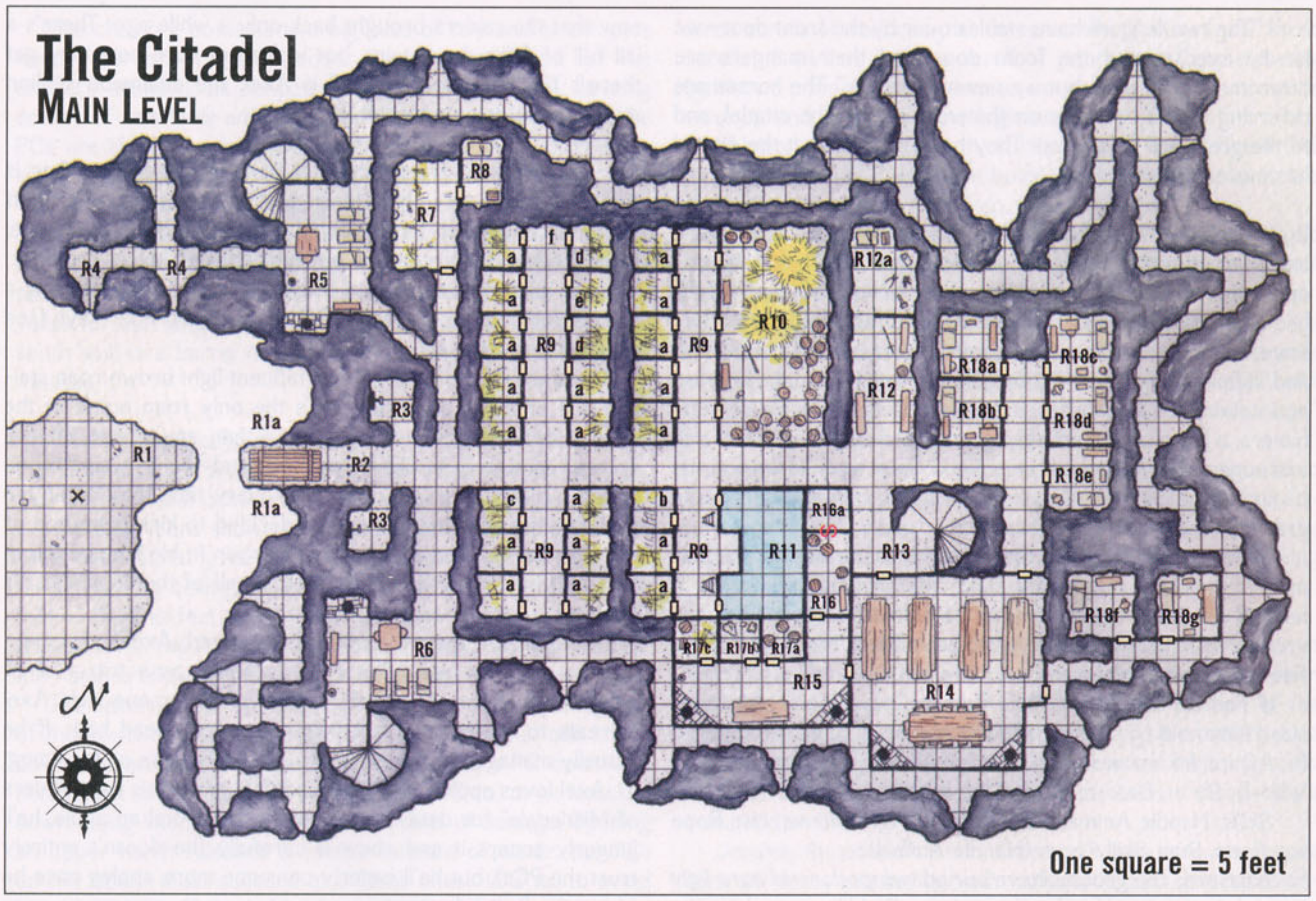
Special: See pages 217-220 of the *Monster Manual* for information on werewolf special attacks and qualities.

Possessions: Leather armor, club, light crossbow with 20 bolts, two *potions of cure light wounds*, two *potions of spider climb*, thieves' tools, key to chest (see **Treasure** below).

Treasure: Murzim keeps his chest locked. The chest holds various adventuring equipment (rope, a backpack, spikes, and the like), a vial of acid, a collection of pens and bottles of ink, a small ivory statuette of the god Malar (55 gp), and a leather bag containing 300 gp.

Wooden Chest: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 25).

Development: So long as the iron door to the kennel (area **R7**) is closed, Murzim cannot hear noises in the rest of the



citadel. Thanks to the grating in his door, Murzim can see and hear just about anything that goes on in the kennel. If the wolves there are attacked, Murzim changes to hybrid form and attacks after 1d3 rounds.

Rg. Stables. This area houses the citadel's animals. The 24 10-foot by 10-foot stalls here have stone walls and strong wooden doors split into top and bottom halves. Unless otherwise noted, each stall has a water trough, a manger, and a thick pile of straw on the floor. In the unoccupied stalls, the straw is fairly clean. Most occupied stalls have soiled straw and the whole area has a barnyard pungency.

Rga. Horse Stalls. Each of these stalls is home to a light warhorse that the Zhents use for their raids. Even when raids are in progress, five or six of these stalls are occupied by horses resting between raids. Occupied stalls have their upper doors open; empty stalls have both doors open.

Creatures (EL 1/stall): The horses are bad tempered. They tolerate their riders but are fond only of their grooms. If a PC approaches a horse, the animal paws the floor and neighs a warning. The horses avoid PCs who peer into their stalls, even if they offer food, and they attack anyone who enters. A successful Animal Empathy check calms them down.

Light Warhorses (up to 19): hp 22 each; *Monster Manual,* page 197.

Development: Any fighting in the stable area sets the horses neighing and kicking. The racket is clearly audible in areas **R2**, **R5**, and **R6**. One of the guards at area **R2** will come to investigate after 1d3 rounds. One raider from area **R5** and one from area **R6** comes to investigate after 1d4+1 rounds. If any of these people fail to return to their posts in 5 minutes, the alarm is raised.

A *speak with animals* spell allows a PC to question the horses. The horses are sullen and evasive but not quite bright enough to really mislead anyone. The horses respond as follows to the appropriate questions:

- "We only get to go out at night, after we walk through the wall." The horses are referring to the portal at area **Rgf**.
- "After we walk through the wall, our masters ride hard, and then we stop and rest while the masters go and fight and sometimes make fire. They come back with lots of heavy things, and sometimes they have other animals or unhappy people with them." This is the horses' view of a raid.
- "All two-leggers look pretty much alike to us." This is the horses' response to questions about who lives at the citadel. The horses can't count, but they know that the people who live here outnumber the party. The horses know who belongs here and who doesn't (they know the PCs don't belong), and they know the grooms, but the rest of the people here pretty much seem the same to them.
- "A runty little two-legger comes by now and then to give us new shoes, and our pets have a fierce pet who comes and fixes our hurts sometimes." The "runt" is Jebalek, the smith (area **R12a**) who shoes the horses. The "fierce pet" is Suddilis, the citadel commander, who sometimes casts cure spells on injured horses. The horses think of Suddilis as a pet, because he never comes here except when the grooms call him here. They think he's "fierce" because the grooms are afraid of him. The horses can't describe Jebalek or Suddilis.

• "The two-leggers have stables over by the front door—we hardly ever go out the front door—and their mangers are down the tunnel a bit, but we never go there." The horses are referring to the barracks on the west side of the citadel, and to the great hall (area **R14**). They have no idea that the citadel has more than one floor.

Rgb. Grooms' Stall. Two human grooms, Padriac and Ewart, are charged with tending the citadel's animals. They have co-opted this stall for their own use. They have laid down a thick bed of clean straw and spread out their blankets on top. They have turned the stall's manger into a storage bin for the tools and supplies they use most frequently, which includes brushes and combs for the horses, several buckets, a couple of rope halters, a big club (for whacking rats), a whetstone, jars of salt and sugar they've swiped from the kitchen, and the keys to the padlocks to area **Rgc**. They keep their larger implements in the granary (area **R10**).

Creatures (EL 1): When they're not busy caring for the animals or mucking our empty stalls, the grooms are dozing in here. If the party attacks any of the animals in the stables, the grooms hear the noise and run to see what is the matter. They flee from any armed intruders they see.

Padriac and Ewart, Male Human Com1: CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 1d4; hp 4, 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d4, knife); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Handle Animal +6, Profession (groom) +4, Use Rope +4; *Feats:* Run, Skill Focus (Handle Animal).

Treasure: The grooms have buried two *potions of cure light wounds* in the straw under the manger. Suddilis gave them the potions so they wouldn't have to bother him with horses that need healing. The grooms put the potions there to keep them out of harm's way.

Development: If captured, Padriac and Ewart are frightened out of their wits. They're slaves, and though they are not loyal to the Zhents, they're reluctant to give the PCs any information for fear the Zhents will punish them. They cave in readily to bribes or threats (Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks gain a +5 bonus).

The grooms are generally familiar with the schedules the citadel's troops follow and the citadel's layout (though if asked to draw a map, it won't be very accurate). They know the important people of the citadel and can give good descriptions of them. They also know everything the horses know, but understand it better and can describe it better, too.

They can reveal the following additional tidbits of information in response to the appropriate questions:

• "We saddle up the horses for the raiders, and they lead them right out through the north wall there." The grooms are referring to the portal at area **Rgf**.

• "Suddilis keeps a pack of horrible creatures in a pit in the chapel. He feeds them the dead bodies of anything he's sacrificed." The grooms relate this with a shudder. They hate attending services at the chapel and dread being sacrificed themselves.

• "While everyone's gone, we go to work cleaning out the stalls, and when everybody comes back, we get the horses stabled and groomed."

• "We never see any prisoners or loot, except for captured animals. There's a fine roan horse up at the north end right now that the raiders brought back only a while ago. There's a jail full of folks downstairs, but we're not sure how they get there." The "fine roan horse" is Axel, the champion stallion stolen from Wolcott Manor.

Rgc. Axel's Stall. Among the loot from the Zhents' raiding is Axel, a stallion of exceptional quality stolen from Wolcott Manor. The Zhents have barred the stall from the outside, placing separate bars on the upper and lower halves the door. They've secured each bar in place with a padlock requiring a successful Open Lock check (DC 20) or the proper keys (see area **Rgb**) to unlock.

Creature (EL 2): Axel is a magnificent light brown roan stallion just entering his prime. He's the only roan horse in the citadel, and he's much finer looking than any of the Zhents' horses. Axel doesn't like being here and lies in wait for the grooms, giving them a good scare every time they enter the stall. For his next trick, Axel has decided to kick open one of the stall doors when anyone tries to open it. He is quite capable of hitting either the top or bottom half of the door with his hooves.

The moment one of the bars is removed, Axel kicks, making the door fly open. Treat Axel's attack as a trip attempt against the character opening the door. After one kick, Axel retreats to the back of his stall, ears erect, head high. If he actually manages to trip someone, he even looks a little smug.

Axel loves apples, and the PCs might know this (see "Riders of Mistledale" for details). If anyone offers Axel an apple, he'll gingerly accept it and chew it carefully (he doesn't entirely trust the PCs), but he'll eagerly consume more apples once he tastes the first one.

Axel knows very little about the complex, but he does want to get out of here badly and he'll make that very clear if the party uses *speak with animals* to converse with him.

Axel, Light Warhorse: hp 24; *Monster Manual,* page 197.

Rgd. Livestock Stalls. These stalls contain an assortment of cows, sheep, and even a few chickens that the raiders have brought back. The larger animals all have brands or earmarks that identify their owners.

Rge. Pig's Stall. Some time ago the raiders captured a wild pig and brought it back to the citadel. The grooms have converted a stall into a pigpen and the pig—a sow—produced a litter of six piglets.

Creatures (EL 2): The sow is protective of her piglets and attacks anyone other than the grooms who enters the stall.

Wild Pig (1): hp 22; *Monster Manual,* page 194 (boar).

Rgf. Portal. The Zhents created this one-way portal to get their horses from the stables to the portals at area **R20**. (Specifically, the portal transports users from here to area **R20f**.) This portal can be triggered twice a day, but only by a humanoid creature leading a horse. It is very likely that the Zhents already have exhausted it for the day by the time the party arrives.

R10. Granary. The center door leading into this room has a 1-foot-square opening cut into the base. A flap of stiff leather is nailed over the opening, forming a small door. Reba the cat (see area **R18e**) and Xthraxix the imp (see area **R24b**) use the door to enter the room and hunt rats.

The chamber contains two big piles of hay and straw, plus twenty barrels of grain (fodder, bedding, and feed for the citadel's animals), all heaped along the east wall. A thriving colony of rats lives among the hay, straw, and grain, and the PCs are likely to see a swarm of naked tails vanishing from sight when they open a door.

Racks on the west wall hold tack and harness for the citadel's horses. A rack on the south wall holds various tools the grooms from area **R9b** use in their work: coils of rope, pitchforks, shovels, brooms, several buckets, two shoulder yokes for carrying buckets, and a wheelbarrow. Also near the south wall is a barrel of molasses, kept tightly sealed against the rats.

R11. Cistern. Rainwater that collects atop the bluff trickles into this room through a maze of pipes. The alcove in the corridor west of the room contains taps for drawing out water.

The door icons shown on the map mark two metal hatches each, one located 5 feet off the floor and the other 20 feet off the floor. (The ceiling height in the corridor is the standard 8 feet; a shaft 10 feet wide, 5 feet deep, and 20 feet high gives access to the top hatch.) Iron ladders set into the walls next to the hatches allow and easy climb to the upper hatches.

The cistern is currently brimming with water. Opening one of the lower hatches releases a gush of water that can knock down a character. Besides getting drenched, a PC opening a hatch must succeed at a Strength check (DC 20) or be knocked down. Being knocked down deals 1d6 points of damage. Opening an upper hatch released a smaller amount of water, but PCs on the ladder must succeed at a Climb check (DC 10) to avoid being knocked off the ladder (4d6 points of falling damage).

Development: While potentially dangerous for the PCs, draining the cistern would make life difficult for the Zhents, as they would have to import water until the cistern refills.

R12. Armory. Racks on the west and east walls hold the citadel's main cache of weapons, which includes composite longbows, heavy crossbows, light crossbows, halfspears, longswords, battle-axes, greataxes, and heavy maces. The troops keep their personal weapons in their quarters, but at any given time the armory has 1d4 of each weapon as spares. In addition, there is a compartmentalized barrel that holds 200 bolts and 200 arrows. Hanging on the walls are five suits of scale mail, one suit of chainmail, and one breastplate (all armor is Medium-size), two bucklers and four large metal shields. Piled on the floor is a collection of damaged equipment taken from slain members of the Dales militia and from drow (see areas **G2a** and **G13** in the first half of the adventure for details). This includes three sets of leather armor, four suits of chainmail, seven short swords, three daggers, four large shields, and two spears.

In addition to the weapons are bundles of wood suitable for arrows, bolts, and spear shafts, and two crates of weapon blades and heads, plus several sacks of feathers for fletching arrows and bolts.

A stone wall 2 feet high separates the armory from the smithy (area **R12a**). The glow from the smithy's forge and furnace usually is visible from the south end of the armory.

Treasure: Two sturdy chests bolted to the floor in the northeast corner round out the chamber's contents. The chests are locked (the smith at area **R12a** has the keys). One chest contains 22 *potions of cure light wounds*. The other chest holds three scrolls of *reduce* (5th), three scrolls of *sleep* (5th), three scrolls of *levitate* (5th), a scroll of *protection from elements* (5th), two potions of *endurance*, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of cat's grace*.

Wooden Chests: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 25). The bolts securing the chests to the floor have: Hardness 10, hp 40, Break (DC 30).

Trap (EL 4 per chest): The chests are locked and protected by *glyph of warding* spells. A 5th-level cleric from Zhentil Keep cast the *glyphs*.

Blindness *Glyphs of Warding:* CR 4; *blindness* (see page 83 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for effects); Fortitude save avoids (DC 15); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28). Creatures speaking the pass-phrase "I obey Bane in all things" (in Common) do not trigger the *glyphs*.

Development: Jebalek will notice anyone poking around in here unless he is asleep (see area **R12a** for details). Any disturbance here brings one guard from area **R13** after 1d4 rounds. If that guard fails to return in 1 minute, the remaining guard raises the alarm.

R12a. Smithy. As noted earlier, the south wall of this area is only 2 feet high, which allows clear vision and hearing between here and the armory (area **R12**). The southern portion of the smithy contains a portable forge and anvil, a workbench, a small furnace, a pile of charcoal, and assorted smithing tools. The alcove in the northwest corner contains a small cot, a desk, and stool.

Jebalek, the citadel's smith, lives and works here. He spends most of his time tinkering with various devices and occasionally repairing weapons and armor or making arrows and bolts. His current project is building an iron maiden for the prison (area **R21**) downstairs.

Creatures (EL 3): Despite his current project, Jebalek is a jovial fellow who is more interested in the technical aspects of his work than in how the finished device will be used. He is a worshiper of Gond who came to the citadel to work on the swinging bridge at area **R1**. He had nothing better to do after the job was done, so he agreed to stay on here. He thinks his employers are humorless and all too grim. The Zhents don't like him much, and they particularly despise his good humor, but they're stuck with him for now.

Jebalek, Male Gnome Rog1/Wiz(Ill)2: CR 3; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 2d4+2 (Wiz) plus 1d6+1 (Rog); hp 14; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/crit 19-20, dagger), or +6 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ gnome (see *Player's Handbook*, page 17), Illusion specialist; AL CN; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Appraise +6, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Craft (armorsmithing) +6, Concentration +5, Escape Artist +7, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Pick Pocket +7, Spellcraft +6, Tumble +7. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll.

Possessions: Keys to the chests in area **R12**, key to locked box (see **Treasure** below), masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts and 10 silvered bolts, dagger, tanglefoot bag, flask of alchemist's fire, wand of *burning hands* (1st level; 23 charges).

Spells Prepared (5/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, mage hand* (×2), *mending, ghost sound*;* 1st—*color spray*, sleep, shield, silent image**.

Spellbook: 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect poison, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound*, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*change self*, color spray*, identify, sleep, shield, silent image*, ventriloquism**.

*These spells belong to the school of Illusion—Jebalek's specialty. Prohibited school: Evocation.

Tactics: Jebalek is supposed to keep watch over the weapons and magic items stored in the armory, but if he's asleep he won't notice a thing unless the party makes some loud noise. If he's awake and working, Jebalek ignores anyone who just casually enters the armory, smiling and waving at folks who just help themselves to weapons and leave.

If anyone starts messing around with the chests or searching the area, and Jebalek notices the intruders before they notice him, he hides and casts *ghost sound* at the south end of the armory, creating a faint grinding and metallic rattle. He follows that with a *silent image* of an iron portcullis closing off the armory from the corridor to the south. He has a flair for the dramatic and shouts: "Now I have you!"

Once the "portcullis" is in place, he demands that the invaders surrender. If they refuse, he pouts and complains that he just can't scare anybody, but he casts *shield,* just to be on the safe side.

If attacked, Jebalek uses what cover he can find (the low, south wall of the smithy makes excellent cover against foes in the armory), and alternates shots from his crossbow with spells. If possible he uses his Hide skill before shooting so that he can sneak attack his opponent. If several foes close to melee range, Jebalek uses his Tumble skill to get clear of them.

If the party actually surrenders, Jebalek doesn't quite know what to do with them. After hemming and hawing a bit, he tells them to go to the stairway at area **R13** and turn themselves over to the guards there.

Treasure: Jebalek has amassed a fair amount of pay in his time at the citadel. A locked metal box under his cot (he has they key) contains 300 gp, two 50-gp peridots, and a set of steel gauntlets with gold and silver chasing (40 gp). In addition, a secret compartment in his desk (Search DC 20) holds his spellbook, which contains the spells listed in his statistics.

Metal Box: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 25.

Development: When Jebalek works, his hammering can be heard all over this floor of the citadel (except areas **R7** and **R8**). He tends to ignore events elsewhere in the complex. He is not a Zhent or a Bane worshiper, and he feels that any victorious invader should treat him as a respected artist. If captured, Jebalek tells the party he has relatives in Zhentil Keep who will pay a 1,000-gp ransom for him (he's telling the truth, but the PCs will have to get a message to Zhentil Keep to make arrangements to collect the payment).

Any disturbance here brings one guard from area **R13** to investigate after 1d4 rounds. If that guard fails to return in 1 minute, the remaining guard raises the alarm.

Jebalek is happy to converse with anyone who does not attack him or try to break into the chests in the armory (he's responsible for those).

Jebalek knows everything the grooms in area **R9b** know and cheerfully provides any information he can. He has the following tidbits to add in response to the appropriate questions or comments from the party:

- "Oh, I guess there must be 50 or 100 Zhents running around here. They sure do bang up a whole lot of armor and weapons. No respect for their equipment! None at all." This is an exaggeration, but Jebalek really isn't aware of it.
- "The big cheese—that would be Suddilis—serves the church of Bane. He runs this place, though Malvina is in charge of the garrison."
- "The Zhents hop around the countryside using portals they've built. Not my favorite way to travel. Why be in such a hurry?"
- "Just put the old eye of Bane on your palm and you can use the portals, except for the one in the stable. Don't know what triggers that, but it just leads downstairs." Specifically, one must have the eye of Bane on the left palm.
- "This is Odette, my iron maiden. Isn't she a beauty? Tricky things, iron maidens. They've got to hold just about any humanoid that comes along, so they've gotta be adjustable, see? All very tricky. And then there's the blades and spikes on the inside—gotta have those just so for each tenant. Very tricky, but I'll lick it. You'll see."

R13. Stairs. The spiral stairs here descend 40 feet to area **R19**.

Creatures (EL 1): Two human guards keep watch here day and night.

Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2): hp 8 each; see area **R2** for complete statistics.

Development: The guards here notice disturbances in area **R12** or **R12a** after 1d4 rounds. One remains here while the other investigates. If that guard fails to return in 1 minute, the remaining guard raises the alarm. The guards react to disturbances in areas **R14**, **R18**, or **R19** after 1 round. Both go to investigate.

R14. Great Hall. This dining and entertainment area remains empty except at mealtimes. A fine wooden table sits near two fireplaces, and twelve high-backed chairs surround it. The spellcasters and officers take their meals here and use it for their counsels. Four longer, lower tables—each 5 feet wide and 20 feet long—are provided for the sergeants and troops. These have long benches on either side.

Development: One of the guards at area **R13** investigates any disturbance here after 1d4 rounds, as noted in the **Development** section of area **R13**.

R15. Kitchen. This kitchen is occupied by five cooks. Two fireplaces have racks and hooks for hanging food over the fire, and the fireplace brickwork includes several ovens for baking. Most of the food preparation is done on a heavy, wooden table that sits between the fireplaces. Hooks under the table hold pots, pans, skewers, knives, and cleavers.

Creatures (EL 2): Four of the cooks are unarmed slaves with no stomach for fighting, though they'll take up implements to defend themselves if necessary. Their first tactic, however, is running through the great hall (area **R14**) to the guards at the stairs (area **R13**). The fifth cook, Capercaal, is a rogue placed here to learn any useful kitchen gossip. Capercaal will strike with her poisoned dagger if she gets a chance.

Cooks, Human Com1 (4): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d4; hp 3, 3, 3, 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d4, improvised weapon); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Craft (cooking) +6, Craft (butchering) +4, or Craft (baking) +4. *Feats:* Skill Focus–Craft (cooking).

Capercaal, Female Human Rog2: CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 2d6+2; hp 11; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d4/crit 19-20 and poison, dagger); SA sneak attack +1d6, poison dagger; SQ evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +2, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +4, Hide +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Pick Pocket +7, Search +3, Spot +7, Tumble +7. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Poisoned dagger, vial of poison (greenblood oil: DC 13, primary damage 1 Con, secondary damage 1d2 Con), vial of antitoxin.

Development: The guards at area **R13** detect any disturbances here, as noted in that area's **Development** section.

R16. Pantry. This chamber holds assorted dry foodstuffs, stored in barrels and crates. A jumble of items against the north wall blocks the secret door there.

R16a. Secret Storage. The north wall of the pantry (area **R16**) must be cleared before the secret door to this area can be opened. The Zhents use this room to store some of the more valuable loot they've taken on their raids.

Treasure: Piled in this area are several valuable items: 24 silver plates (10 gp each), ten silver candlesticks (25 gp each), two large tapestries (350 gp each), 21 bottles of fine wine (10 gp each), six bottles of fine brandy (20 gp each), 19 fine pelts (total value 285 gp), and 15 bolts of fine wool cloth (20 gp each). If the PCs take these items back to the Dales, most of them can be identified and returned to the owners (netting the PCs more money than they could get by selling them).

R17. Storage. These 10-foot-square rooms have unlocked stone doors. The contents of each room are detailed below:

R17a. Buttery. This room is crammed with barrels and casks of common beverages, about half of which the citadel's troops have seized during raids.

R17b. Meat Locker. The butchered carcasses of several cows and sheep hang in here. Other perishable items such as lard, butter, some fresh fruits and vegetables, and an assortment of sausages, bacon, and other cured meats are stored here, too.

R17c. Storeroom. This room holds assorted kitchen supplies such as charcoal, kegs of salt, scrub brushes, and soap. The cooks have taken some straw from the granary (area **R10**) to make beds for themselves (it's chilly in here, but it beats sleeping on the kitchen floor).

R18. Officers' Quarters. These 15-foot square chambers each have a comfortable bed and chair, a chest of drawers, and a charcoal brazier for heat. The doors are locked (Open Lock DC 25), and the occupants have the keys.

Development: Creatures in this area notice disturbances in area **R22** or **R23** and go to investigate after 1d4 rounds. They investigate disturbances in area **R19** or **R25** after 1 round.

R18a. Yvan's Room. Yvan is the citadel's senior wizard. He lives here with his cat familiar, Reba. The room's door has an opening with a leather flap just like the one in the granary (area **R10**), allowing Reba to go in and out.

Yvan's bed has a canopy and curtains. He also has a writing desk, a workbench, set of shelves, and a box of sand (for Reba's use). A 10-foot-square fine woolen rug covers the middle of the floor.

The shelves contain assorted knickknacks (shells, monster teeth, spent runestones, snakeskins, and the like), plus several pottery jars filled with spell components–at least five of everything needed for any spell in Yvan's spellbooks, and one or two for any arcane spell up to 3rd level (Yvan is not only a packrat, he's looking ahead).

The desk contains several drawers filled with carefully stored writing supplies (ink, quills, parchment, paper, rulers, and a magnifying glass).

Creatures (EL 3): Yvan is part of the citadel's garrison and usually does not join raiding parties. Yvan stays here unless summoned by Suddilis or Malvina.

Yvan, Male Human Wiz(Evo)3: CR 3; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d4+3; hp 13; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), +4 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SQ cat familiar (Reba), Evocation specialist; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +7, Hide +4, Knowledge (Arcana) +8, Knowledge (religion) +6, Listen +3*, Move Silently +6*, Spellcraft +8, Spot +3*; *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

*Familiar-related skill bonuses: Yvan receives a +2 bonus to Move Silently checks, as well as the Alertness feat if Reba is within arm's reach.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts and 10 silvered bolts, two tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cat's grace*, scroll of *dispel magic*, scroll of *invisibility*, scroll of *flaming sphere*, key to room.

Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0–*detect magic* (×2), *flare** (×2), *resistance;* 1st–*color spray, magic missile** (×2), *sleep;* 2nd–*detect thoughts, invisibility, flaming sphere**.

Spellbook: 0–*arcane mark, dancing lights**, *daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare**, *ghost sound, light**, *mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation read magic, resistance;* 1st–*burning hands, charm person, color spray, magic missile**, *sleep, Tenser's floating disk**, *true strike;* 2nd–*detect thoughts, flaming sphere**, *invisibility, protection from arrows, see invisibility.*

*These spells belong to the school of Evocation, which is Yvan's speciality. Prohibited school: Conjuration.

Reba, Yvan's Female Cat Familiar: CR 1; Tiny Magical Beast (1 foot long); HD 3d4; hp 7; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d2-4, 2 claws), +0 melee (1d3-4, bite); SQ improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, touch; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +17 (+25 in areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth), Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +6. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (claw), Weapon Finesse (bite).

Special Abilities: See *Player's Handbook*, page 51, for information on familiar special abilities.

Treasure: The top drawer of the desk holds a small pouch with 75 pp and another pouch with ten garnets (10 gp each). The bottom drawer holds Yvan's spellbook, which is protected by a **Trap** (see below).

Trap (EL 1): Anyone opening Yvan's spellbook without first disabling a hidden latch built into the book's spine releases a spring-loaded scything blade hidden in the book's cover.

Scything Blade Trap (1): CR 1; +8 melee (1d8/×3 crit); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 21).

R18b-R18c. Wizards' Rooms. The citadel's two junior wizards, Nehum and Kuspur, occupy areas **R18b** and **R18c** respectively.

Creature (EL 1): Nehum is out with a raiding party, and the PCs might have already encountered him (see the "Random Encounters" section). Kuspur, however, is present. Each room has a desk in addition to the standard furnishings, and each wizard keeps his spellbook in his desk.

Kuspur, Male Human Wiz(Evo)1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall,); HD 1d4+4; hp 8; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SQ, Evocation specialist; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +5, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts and 10 silvered bolts, dagger, two tanglefoot bags, *potion of cure light wounds, potion of cat's grace,* key to room.

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare** (×2), *resistance;* 1st—*color spray, sleep, magic missile**.

Spellbook: 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights**, *daze, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, flare**, *ghost sound, light**, *mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation read magic resistance;* 1st—*burning hands, color spray, magic missile**, *sleep, true strike.*

*These spells belong to the school of Evocation, which is Kuspur's specialty. Prohibited school: Conjuration.

R18d-R18f. Lieutenants' Rooms. Malvina, the garrison commander, has three lieutenants—Rogg, Laskur, and Uwna—who live in these rooms. One of the three is always at the citadel to assist Malvina, while the other two lead raids.

In addition to the standard furnishings, each room has a rack for hanging up armor and weapons, and a big wooden dummy for weapon practice. All three dummies are pretty badly hacked up.

Creatures (EL 1/room): When the PCs enter this area, Uwna has just returned with the raiding party in area **R5** and is relaxing in her room (area **18f**). Rogg is found with Captain Malvina during the day and in his room (area **18e**) at night.

Lieutenant Uwna, Female Half-orc Bbn1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 1d12+1; hp 13; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft. (scale mail, base spd 40 ft.); AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 scale mail); Atk +6 melee (1d12+4/crit ×3, masterwork greataxe), or +3 ranged (1d8+2/crit 19-20, mighty composite longbow); SA rage 1/day; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +5, Jump +3, Listen +4, Wilderness Lore +4. *Feats:* Weapon Focus (greataxe).

Possessions: Masterwork scale mail, masterwork greataxe, mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, silvered dagger, climber's kit, *potion of cure light wounds,* key to room.

Lieutenant Rogg, Male Half-orc Bbn1: hp 13; statistics and possessions identical to Lieutenant Uwna (see above).

Treasure: All three lieutenants have taken the opportunity to enrich themselves during the raids they have led.

Laskur has an unlocked chest with a bolt of silk (100 gp)) stuffed in one drawer. Under his bed, he keeps a masterwork bastard sword.

Uwna has carefully removed and hollowed out the head of her practice dummy and stuffed it with two moss agates (10 gp each), a tiger eye (10 gp), a bloodstone (50 gp), two moonstones (50 gp each), and a silver necklace with an amber pendant (120 gp). A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals the dummy's hollow head. One of her chest drawers has a collection of silver spoons worth 75 gp.

Rogg has a locked wooden chest under his bed that contains 500 sp, three golden cups (40 gp each), and an ivory statuette of a unicorn (55 gp).

Wooden Chest: 2 in thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 18); Open Lock (DC 25).

R18g. Malvina's Room. Malvina, the captain of the garrison, lives here. Instead of a comfortable chair, Malvina has a long worktable and a pair of hard stools. Piles of ink-stained parchment sheets litter the table; under the table rests the **Treasure.** Malvina spends a few hours each day writing orders, duty schedules, and reports to her superiors at Darkhold. She also keeps an accounting of all the loot taken on raids and handles the citadel's pay records.

Creatures (EL 2, 3 if Rogg is present): Currently, Lieutenant Rogg has been assigned as Malvina's assistant. During the day, he can be found with Malvina; at night, he sleeps in area **18e.**

Captain Malvina, Female Human Ftr2: CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 2d10+4; hp 19; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft. (half-plate, base spd 30 ft.); AC 19 (+7 half-plate, +2 large shield); Atk +7 melee (1d10+3/crit 19-20, masterwork bastard sword), or +4 ranged (1d8+2/crit 19-20, masterwork mighty composite longbow); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +2, Listen +2, Ride +6. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Possessions: Half-plate, large steel shield, silvered masterwork bastard sword, masterwork mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of endurance,* ring of keys to every door in the citadel, the paychest, and her own strongbox.

Treasure: A wooden crate under the table holds writing supplies and a locked metal paychest that holds 500 gp and 25 assorted gems (ten garnets, four moss agates, five lapis lazuli, and six tiger eyes) worth 10 go each. The chest is rigged with a **Trap** (see below)

Malvina keeps her personal treasure in smaller locked metal box. This contains a pouch with 50 pp and two silver rings, one set with a bloodstone, the other set with a garnet (worth 25 gp each).

Metal Box and Chest: 1 in thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 18); Open Lock (DC 28).

Trap (EL 2): Any creature that tampers with the lock on the paychest without first searching for and successfully disabling traps releases a poison needle.

Poison Needle Trap: CR 2; +8 ranged (1, plus greenblood oil poison); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 20). Greenblood oil—DC 13, primary damage 1 Con, secondary damage 1d2 Con.

R19. Stairs. The spiral stairs here ascend 40 feet to area **R13**.

Creatures (EL 1): Two human guards keep watch here day and night.

Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2): hp 8 each; see area **R2** for complete statistics.

Development: The guards here notice disturbances in area **R13** or **R24** after 1d4 rounds. One remains here with the other investigates. If that guard fails to return in 1 minute, the remaining guard raises the alarm. The guards react to disturbances in areas **R22**, **R23**, or **R24** after 1 round, both choosing to investigate.

R20. Portals. This area contains the portals the Zhents have been using for their raids. With the exception of the portals at areas **R20a** and **R20f**, all are one-way portals that can be activated once a tenday. To trigger the portal, one must have the eye of Bane drawn or tattooed on the left palm and must touch the left palm to the portal, with the fingers outspread.

A heavy, ironbound door seals off each portal. One must open the door to access the portal. With the door opened, the portal looks like an archway set into a masonry wall. All the doors are locked; the garrison commander, Malvina, has the only keys.

Ironbound Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 30; Break (DC 25); Open Lock (DC 25).

R20a. Darkhold Portal. This portal can be activated once a month. It leads to the Zhent stronghold at Darkhold. It is currently inactive.

R20b-R20f. Raiding Portals. The Zhents use these portals to conduct their raids. The portal at **R20f** also marks the arrival point for creatures using the portal at area **R9f**.

R21. Vault. The door leading into this area looks just like the doors that seal the portals in area **R20**. The room is intended to hold bulk goods seized during raids until they can be shipped to Darkhold. Currently, it holds a big pile of charcoal (fuel for the citadel's fireplaces) and seven chests of rare spices seized from a caravan.

Treasure: Each of the seven chests of spices weighs 20 pounds and is worth 200 gp.

R22. Prison. Two half-orc guards are always on duty here, keeping an eye on the prisoners in area **R23**. The guards do not have keys to the cells (the captain of the garrison, Malvina has a set, as does Suddilis, the citadel commander), but they do have keys to the prisoners' manacles.

The half-orcs keep the prison's two *continual flame* spells doused. The prison furnishings are sparse: a table and two chairs for the guards plus a torture rack, hooks and pegs holding manacles, whips, pinchers, and other loathsome implements, and a charcoal brazier. The Zhents are constructing an iron maiden (see area **R12a**) to help round out the décor.

Creatures (EL 1): Two half-orc guards stand guard here day and night, playing knucklebones and occasionally tormenting prisoners they choose to dislike at a given time.

Zhent Guards, Half-orc War1 (2): hp 8 each; see area **R4** for complete statistics.

Development: The guards here notice disturbances in area **R19** or **R24** after 1d4 rounds. One remains here while the other investigates. If the investigating guard fails to return in 1 minute, the remaining guard raises the alarm.

R23. Cells. The Zhents use these cells to hold intelligent prisoners or any creature they think cannot be safely held in the stable (area **R9**). The poor souls confined here are all destined for the slave markets of the south, provided they escape sacrifice in the chapel (area **R25**). Most of the prisoners are suffering from exposure, starvation, and abuse.

Each cell has a cold, bare stone floor, a single chamber pot, a wooden bucket, and walls studded with steel rings for manacling unruly or dangerous prisoners. The cell doors consist of steel bars with separate, hinged sections for sliding the buckets and chamber pots in and out.

Doors of Steel Bars: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 25)).

R23a. Empty Cell.

R23b. Commoners' Cell. Five human commoners seized during raids are kept here (including Walter, the groom from Wolcott Manor), but they are not manacled.

Creatures (EL —): Two women and three men (including Walter) are confined here. All have been horribly abused.

Prisoners, Male/Female Human Com1 (5): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d4; hp 3 each (currently 1); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d2 subdual, unarmed strike); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Craft (any) +6, Craft (any) +4, Profession (any) +4; *Feats:* Skill Focus (any Craft).

Development: The reward for rescuing Walter is 100 gp. The families and overlords of the other prisoners will pay a total ransom of 50 gp for their return.

R23c. Elves' Cell. Here the Zhents keep an elf and a drow. The Zhents captured both near Galath's Roost and have placed them together in the cell, hoping to make their captivity as unpleasant as possible.

Creatures (EL 1): The elf is Inialos Oakwood, a moon elf ranger. The drow is Gwenect Moondark, a drow ranger of House Jaelre. Both prisoners are manacled, and they have been given enough chain so they can reach each other easily. They have both found places where they can sleep out of the other's reach, but they must come within reach to receive food and water from the guards. At the moment they have an uneasy truce.

Inialos Oakwood, Male Moon Elf Rgr1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in tall); HD 1d10; hp 10 (currently 5); Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d2+2 subdual, unarmed strike); SA favored enemy (goblinoid); SQ moon elf

(see *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*); AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Wilderness Lore +5; *Feats:* Alertness, Track.

Gwenect Moondark, Female Drow Rgr1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft, 6 in tall); HD 1d10+1; hp 11 (currently 6); Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d2+1 subdual, unarmed strike); SA favored enemy (dwarves); SQ drow (see *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +7, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +8; *Feats:* Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore), Track.

Manacles: 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 10; Break (DC 26); Open Lock (DC 25); Escape Artist (DC 25).

Development: Inialos's kin will pay 100 gp for his return. No one will pay for Gwenect's return, but if the PCs release her she will agree to perform one service for them, provided it lies within her capabilities.

R23d. Empty Cell.

R23e. Kurud's Cell. The Zhents believe they have Kurud, a human paladin of Torm, manacled in this cell. In fact, Kurud is Kurudava Khlorous, a gold dragon wyrmling. The Zhents threw him in here because they claimed they couldn't bear to look at his ugly face. Suddilis has promised the troops that when Kurud is finally sacrificed, it will be something truly special.

Creature (EL 4): Kurudava has used his *polymorph self* ability to slip his manacles several times, but he has not yet escaped from his cell. He knows he can assume a form small enough to slip out through his cell's bars, but he's not sure what to do after that. He is (foolishly) considering allowing himself to be taken for sacrifice, then assuming his true shape and attacking his captors.

If released, he follows the party around like a lost puppy, resolving not to leave them until he has done them one great favor. The favor could be crucial to the characters' survival or it could be a disaster, depending on the circumstances.

Kurudava Khlorous, Male Gold Dragon Wyrmling: CR 4; Medium-size dragon (fire) (7 ft. body); HD 8d12+16; hp 68; AL LG; two alternate forms.

Dragon Form: Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 60 ft., Fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 17 (+7 natural); Atk +11 melee (1d8+3, bite), +6 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws), +6 melee (1d4+1, 2 wings); SA breath weapon, SQ blindsight 30 feet, keen senses, fire immunity, *water breathing, polymorph self* 3/day, sleep immunity, paralysis immunity; AL LG; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +9, Escape Artist +7, Jump +11, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Listen +8, Search +9, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8; *Feats:* Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): As a standard action, the gold dragon can produce a cone of fire 30 feet long or a cone of weakness gas. Once the dragon breathes, it must wait 1d4 rounds before he can do so again. Creatures caught in the cone of fire take 2d10 points of fire damage; a Reflex save (DC 16) reduces the damage by half. Creatures caught within the cone of gas must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 16) or take 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

Human form: As dragon form except: AC 10; SA none; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Possessions: none.

R24. Clerics' Quarters. These rooms are similar to the ones at area **R18**, except that each also has wardrobe for storing vestments and a mural on the west wall showing the symbol of Bane (a hand with spread fingers and an eye in the center). Suddilis, the citadel's commander and senior cleric, lives here along with his assistants.

Development: Clerics in this area notice disturbances in area **R22** or **R23** and investigate after 1d4 rounds. They investigate disturbances in area **R19** or **R25** after 1 round.

R24a. Acolytes' Quarters. Suddilis's junior assistants, Kletus and Matilde, share this room. They have a pair of bunk beds.

Creature (EL 1): Matilde spends much of her time accompanying raiding parties, but she is currently assigned as an aid to Suddilis and can be found in his company during the day, and here at night. Another acolyte, Kletus, is out with a raiding party, and the PCs might have already encountered him (see the "Random Encounters" section).

Matilde, Female Human Clr1 (Bane): CR 1; Medium-size Human-oid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 1d8+1; hp 10; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (splint mail, base spd 30 ft.); AC 17 (-1 Dex, +6 splint mail, +2 large shield); Atk +2 melee (1d8+1, masterwork morningstar), or -1 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA smite, rebuke or command undead; SQ +2 to saving throw DC of an compulsion spell; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref -1, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +5, Perform (chant, drum) +1, Spellcraft +4. *Feats:* Iron Will, Scribe Scroll.

Possessions: Splint mail, large steel shield, masterwork morningstar, light crossbow with 10 bolts and 10 silvered bolts, *potion of cat's grace,* scroll of *protection from elements,* two scrolls of *cure light wounds,* key to room, key to personal strongbox (see **Treasure** below).

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, guidance, resistance;* 1st—*bane, cause fear, command*.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day: +4 attack, +1 damage), Tyranny (+2 to save DC of compulsion spells).

Treasure: The wardrobe contains two sets of fine vestments worth 60 gp each. In addition, two locked metal boxes (Kletus and Matilde have keys) stored under the lower bunk each contain a blackened silver incense burner (worth 20 gp), 2d8 sticks of incense (worth 5 gp each), and a leather pouch containing 50 pp.

Metal Boxes: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30 each; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 25).

R24b. Suddilis's Quarters. Suddilis has a small, personal altar topped with an onyx statue of Bane. During the day, Matilde can be found here with Suddilis (see area **R24a** for Matilde's statistics). At night, Suddilis usually sleeps alone.

Creatures (EL 4): When his duties don't take him elsewhere, Suddilis is usually here resting, meditating, or enjoying a tryst with Zetta, his senior assistant.

Suddilis's advisor and bodyguard, the imp Xthraxix, also lives here. Xthraxix is fond of using the charcoal brazier for a bed and usually keeps the fire well stoked; however, Xthraxix frequently wanders the citadel, either invisible or *polymorphed* into a rat or cat.

Suddilis, Male Human Clr3 (Bane): CR 3; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 3d8+6; hp 23; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (full plate, base spd 30 ft.); AC 20 (+8 full plate, +2 large shield); Atk +4 melee (1d8+1, masterwork morningstar), or +2 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA smite, rebuke or command undead 4/day; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +7; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +8, Intimidate +4, Spellcraft +6. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll.

Possessions: Full plate, large steel shield, masterwork morningstar, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of blur, potion of cat's grace,* scroll of *protection from elements,* two scrolls of *cure light wounds,* scroll of *magic weapon,* key to room and personal strongbox, keys to cells in area **R22**.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1/2+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, resistance;* 1st—*bane, cause fear, shield of faith, command*;* 2nd—*bull's strength; summon monster II, scare**.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day: +4 attack, +1 damage), Tyranny (+2 to save DC of compulsion spells).

Xthraxix (Imp): hp 17; *Monster Manual,* page 48.

Treasure: The wardrobe contains a set of fine vestments worth 120 gp. In addition, the statue of Bane on the altar is worth 225 gp (it weighs 50 pounds). A locked metal box stored under the bed a gold incense burner (200 gp), 4d8 sticks of incense (5 gp each), and a leather pouch containing 120 pp.

Metal Box: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 25).

R24c. Assistant's Quarters. Zetta, Suddilis's senior assistant, lives here. Her room is identical to area **R24a** except there is only one bed.

Creatures (EL 1): Zetta usually only comes here to meditate and rest. She can be found here during the night and in the company of Suddilis during the day.

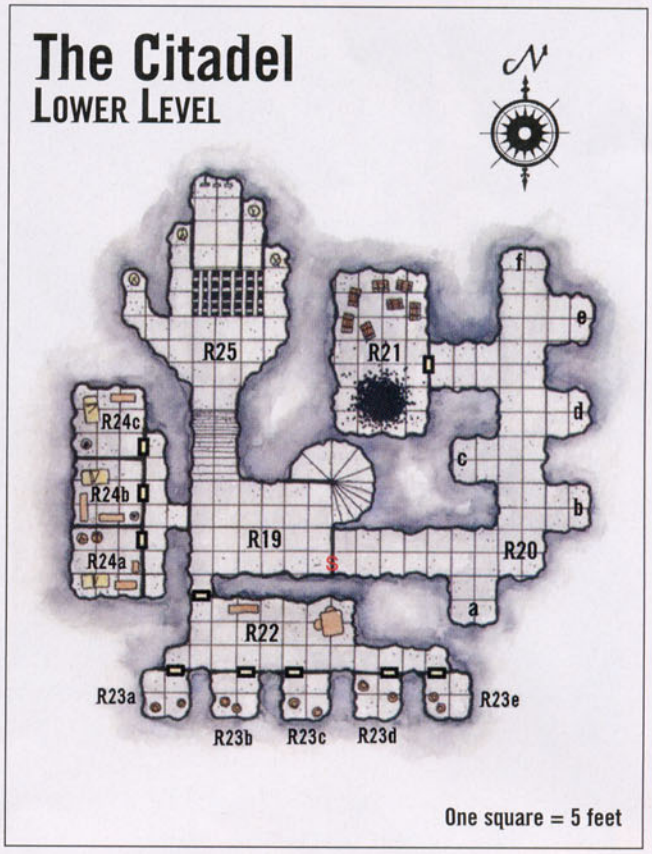
Zetta, Female Human Clr1 (Bane): hp 11; statistics, spells, and possessions otherwise identical to Mathilde (area **R24a**).

R25. Chapel. This chamber is dedicated to the evil god Bane.

At the bottom of the stairs, you find an oddly shaped chamber with a vaulted ceiling barely higher than your heads. Straight ahead, you see a bloodstained grating 10 feet long and 15 feet wide. A charnel stench rises from the grating. Beyond the grating you see four alcoves of various widths and depths. The longest and widest alcove, in the center, has three levers. The three narrower alcoves have some sort of pedestals with big drums attached. A fifth alcove angles off to your left.

A single flame burns in an iron cage at the peak of the chamber's ceiling, casting eerie shadows everywhere. The walls and ceilings are festooned with murals of large, black hands with staring eyes in their centers.

The chamber is constructed to resemble the hand symbol of Bane, with the alcoves forming the fingers and the grate



serving as the eye. The flame on the ceiling is a *continual flame* spell, and it is the only light in the chamber. The center of the vault is only 12 feet high, and the vault curves down to a height of about 8 feet where it joins the walls.

The chamber has received an *unhallow* spell from a 5th-level cleric (the same cleric who created the *glyphs of warding* in area **R12**), centered just below the *continual flame* spell.

During services, worshipers kneel in the floor at the south end of the chamber while the priests stand in the alcoves, chanting and beating drums. Sacrifices are bound, laid atop the grate, and killed slowly. After they're dead, the priests open the grate with the levers in the center alcove and dump the body to the ghouls kept in the pit below.

The ghouls' pit is 20 feet deep, with a floor covered in splintered bone. There are four iron ladders (on the east and west walls, and at the east and west ends of the south wall) that enable the ghouls to climb out of the pit. The priests usually open the grate long enough to dump in a body, and the ghouls have learned to wait patiently for their meals.

The three levers in the center alcove operate the grate. The left lever opens the western 5-foot by 10-foot section of grate, the center lever operates the center section, and the right lever operates the east section. The sections are hinged at their north ends. The levers have two positions: up and down. With the lever up, the corresponding section of grating is closed. With the lever down, the grate section opens. It is a move-equivalent action to operate a lever.

Creatures (EL 3, 2 if the ghouls are confined to the pit): The chapel usually is empty, except for three ghouls in the pit. During services, nearly the whole population of the citadel can be crammed in here.

Ghouls (3): hp 24 each; *Monster Manual,* page 97.

Tactics: The whole chapel and the pit lies within the effect of the *unhallow* spell. The effect also reaches 5 feet up the stairs leading to the chamber. The spell provides a -4 unholy penalty to turning checks and a +4 unholy bonus to turning checks made to rebuke undead. Further, all worshipers of Bane gain the benefit of an *aid* spell when in the area of effect.

So long as the ghouls remain trapped in the pit, there's little they can do to the party. The PCs can freely cast spells on the ghouls and can make ranged attacks on the ghouls while the grate remains closed. The grate gives the ghouls three-quarters cover (+7 AC, +3 Reflex save bonus).

Suddilis and the other clerics prefer to fight in here if possible, and if the PCs really start cleaning out the place, any surviving Zhents will retreat here to make their last stand.

When fighting in here, the Zhents retreat into the central alcove and open up all three sections of the grate. If possible, they wait until an attacker steps on a grate, but their main goal is to release the ghouls in the pit. Once the grates are opened, the Zhents make ranged attacks and use spells.

R26a-R26b. Sergeants' Quarters. These areas are similar the rooms at area **R18** except that the doors are not locked, and each contains two beds. Each also has a fireplace.

Creatures (EL 1/room): A human and half-orc sergeant share each room. During the day, the human sergeants are in areas **R27a-b** and the half-orcs are asleep in these rooms; at night, the half-orcs are on duty and the humans are asleep.

Zhent Sergeant, Human Ftr1 (1/room): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d10+1; hp 11 each; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft. (splint mail, base spd 30 ft.); AC 19 (+7 half-plate, +2 large shield); Atk +5 melee (1d10+2/crit 19-20, masterwork bastard sword), or +3 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3, masterwork mighty composite longbow); AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Handle Animal +3, Listen +3, Ride +5. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Possessions: Splint mail, large steel shield, silvered masterwork bastard sword, masterwork mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds,* key to personal chest (see **Treasure** below).

Zhent Sergeant, Half-orc Ftr1 (1/room): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d10+1; hp 11 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (splint mail, base spd 30 ft.); AC 19 (+7 half-plate, +2 large shield); Atk +6 melee (1d10+3/crit 19-20, masterwork bastard sword), or +3 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3, masterwork mighty composite longbow); SQ half-orc (see *Player's Handbook,* page 19, for details); AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +1, Ride +3; *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Possessions: Splint mail, large steel shield, silvered masterwork bastard sword, masterwork mighty composite longbow [+2] with 10 arrows and 10 silvered arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds,* key to personal chest (see **Treasure** below).

Treasure: Each sergeant has a locked wooden chest stored under his bed that contains assorted gear and a leather pouch with four garnets (10 gp each) and 150 gp.

Wooden Chest: 2 in thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 18); Open Lock (DC 25).

Development: A sleeping sergeant hears any disturbance in the adjacent barracks after 1d4 rounds (assuming he isn't awakened earlier) and goes to investigate—armed, but not armored.

R27a-R27b. Upper Barracks. These rooms each contain three bunks (with three stacked beds apiece), a blackened fireplace, and a wooden table with chairs. Each room houses sixteen guards (eight humans and eight half-orcs), but because they work 12-hour shifts, only eight guards (four humans and four half-orcs) occupy each room at any given time; the others are standing watch throughout the citadel (as noted in the various encounter area descriptions).

A Zhent sergeant (human during the day, half-orc at night) supervises the eight off-duty guards in each room, rallying them whenever a general alarm is sounded. When a sergeant's shift ends, he returns to area **R26** to sleep.

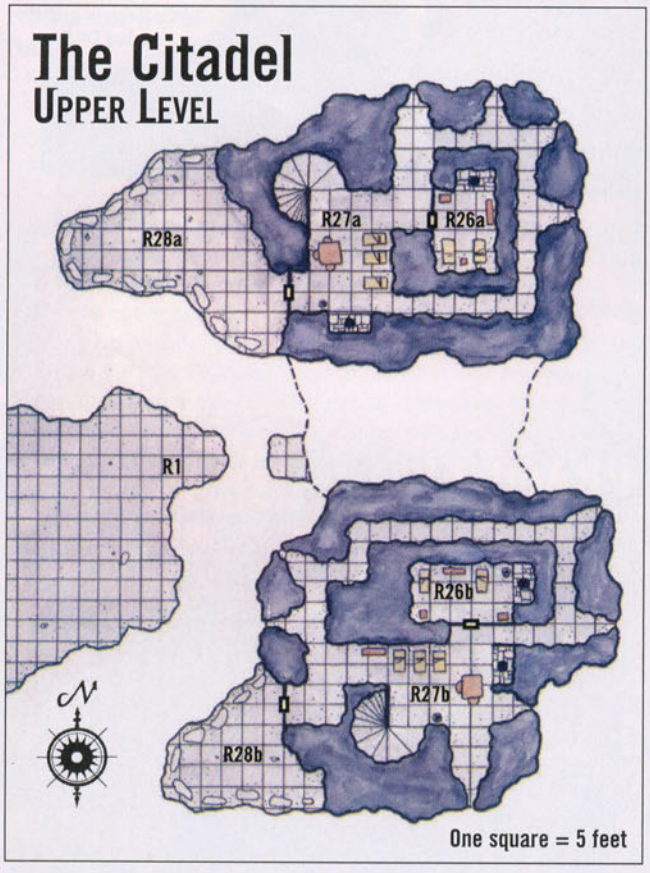
The doors leading to area **R28** are stone and are always kept locked. They only have keyholes on the inside; see area **R28** for details.

Creatures (EL 6/room): If the PCs avoid tripping a general alarm and enter the barracks quietly, roll 1d6 to determine how many of the eight off-duty guards are sleeping. The on-duty sergeant and any awake guards are playing knucklebones, arm wrestling, or cleaning their armor and weapons.

Zhent Guards, Human War1 (4/room): hp 8 each; see area **R2** for complete statistics.

Zhent Guards, Half-Orc War1 (4/room): hp 8 each; see area **R4** for complete statistics.

Zhent Sergeant, Human or Half-orc Ftr1 (1/room): hp 11; see area **R26** for complete statistics.



Tactics: The off-duty guards are mostly interested in resting, and they tend to ignore what's happening anywhere else in the citadel until roused by their sergeant. They follow the same general tactics as the raiders in area **R5**.

Treasure: Each guard has a padlocked chest underneath the bottom row bunks. (There also are some well-used chamber pots under the bunks.) The chests hold assorted personal gear and adventuring equipment, plus some personal treasure, which totals nine 10-gp gems (a mixture of garnets and moss agates) and 250 gp.

Wooden Chests: 1 in thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Break (DC 18); Open Lock (DC 20).

Development: Anyone awake in here notices disturbances at area **R1** or **R28** after 1d4 rounds (if not alerted sooner by the guards at area **R28**). Once alerted, they awaken their comrades and go to investigate. Sleeping guards arise in 2 rounds and don their armor hastily, which takes 5 rounds.

R28a-R28b. Crenelated Platforms. These areas look like natural stone formations but are actually crenelated fighting platforms. Two guards stand watch on each platform, keeping an eye on area **R1**. The doors leading to area **R27** are stone and locked from the inside. They have no keyholes on this side. Open Lock checks from this side cannot unlock or open the doors, but *knock* spells will.

Creatures (EL 2): Two human guards are posted on each platform during the day; two half-orcs stand watch at night.

Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2/platform): hp 8 each; see area **R2** for complete statistics.

Zhent Guards, Half-orc War1 (2/platform): hp 8 each; see area **R4** for complete statistics.

Tactics: In a fight, the guards use the crenelations, gaining one-half cover (+4 AC bonus, +2 Reflex save bonus). After 3 rounds of fighting, or anytime a guard is killed, one guard moves to the door leading to area **R27** and shouts for help, pounding on the door for good measure. It takes the guards in area **R27** 1 round to notice (if they haven't already noted the disturbance on their own).

Development: The guards here study anyone approaching the citadel (see the "Getting Inside" sidebar for details). They fire their bows at anyone they recognize as intruders.

Troubleshooting

The section contains advice for handling the inconvenient or the unexpected.

The Zhents Expect Attack

If the party encounters any Zhent raiders in the first half of the adventure but allows them to escape though the portal, the Zhents expect trouble. They briefly double the number of guards at area **R2** and **R28**, bringing in extra troops to handle the work. They also clean out all the loot they have stored in areas **R16a** and **R21** (they ship the goods overland, since their portal to Darkhold cannot be activated yet). In addition, the Zhents are much quicker to react to disturbances inside the citadel. Subtract two from any die roll you make to determine how long it takes the residents to react, and treat results of 0 or less as an immediate reaction.

The Zhents only maintain the extra guards for three or four days, however, before returning to business as usual and sending the extra troops away.

The Party Flees the Citadel

The only exit from the citadel (other than flying or magical transport) is through area **R1**. About 300 feet from the western edge of the map, a trail leads down off the cliff. The whole area is open, with no cover at all, so any guards on the battlements can make ranged attacks on them.

Once the party leaves, it takes the garrison 1d4+3 minutes to organize a pursuit. The pursuing group consists of the following NPCs, assuming they are still alive: Malvina (area **R18g**), Yvan (area **R18a**), five guards (area **27**), and Murzim (area **R8**). The Zhents are mounted on light warhorses from area **R9**. The two fiendish wolves from area **R7** accompany them.

The fleeing party can elude pursuit if they are mounted on light warhorses (or any other mounts with speeds of 60 feet or more). Otherwise, they will most likely have to fight it out on the trail. The Zhents will try to capture the PCs if they can.

The PCs Are Captured

Whenever they think the have the upper hand, the Zhents try to subdue and capture foes. If the Zhents get their hands on any PCs who are below 0 hit points but not yet dead, they revive the characters if they can.

The Zhents strip prisoners to their breeches, toss them into one of the empty cells in area **R23**, and manacle them to the walls. They hold the PCs for sacrifice in the chapel. It is possible for captured PCs to slip their bonds, break out of their cells, overcome their guards, and escape (perhaps stopping off at area **R12** to re-equip). If you feel like giving the PCs some help, assume that Kurudava Khlorous, the gold dragon in cell **R23e**, decides to make a break for it. With the dragon's aid, the party's chances of success are much higher.

Concluding the Adventure

Once the PCs depart the citadel, the adventure is over. The Zhents quickly realize that the citadel's secret is out and they go about destroying all the portals that currently lead to it. This process takes about a month, however, giving the PCs time to raid the citadel again if they wish. During this period, the Zhents remain constantly vigilant (see "The Zhents Expect Attack" above), which makes additional forays hazardous.

It is possible that the Zhents mark the PCs as particularly annoying and dangerous foes, but equally possible that other groups such as the Harpers and the Riders of Mistledale also take note of the party. Further, if the PCs free Inialos Oakwood, they have a friend for life. If they have freed Gwenect Moondark, they have a friend of sorts among the drow of Cormanthor, which might come in handy at some point. The PCs might also win the friendship of Kurudava Khlorous. The gold dragon might be persuaded to keep in touch with the group and perhaps do them a favor or two when the time is right. Finally, the PCs come to the attention of Zander Wolcott. No statistics are presented for this NPC, so you are free to do with him (or her) as you will. Zander might simply fade into the background, or the party might have found themselves a powerful ally and sponsor. Ω

Skip Williams, better known as Dragon Magazine*'s Sage, recently finished a long sojourn in Faerûn as a designer working on the new* Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting. *He offers this tale of derring-do in the Dales, one of his favorite corners of Faerûn.*

Encounter Level Chart

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (EL) for all of the keyed encounters in "The Raiders of Galath's Roost."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
–	Simimar, Male Moon Elf Ftr1 Lathai, Male Moon Elf Ftr1	2
–	Jarrod Rold, Male Human Rgr1 Riders, Male/Female Human Ftr1 (4) Rider, Male Human Wiz(Div)1 (1) Light Warhorses (6)	5
G2	Krenshars (2)	2
G4	Stirges (2)	1
G7	Giant Bombardier Beetles (3)	3
G8	Rossal (Pseudodragon)	1
G9	Giant Ant Workers (2) Giant Ant Soldier (1)	2 +2
G14	Water Mephit (1)	3
G15	Hinged Grate Trap (1)	3
G16	Assassin Vine (1)	3
G17	Giant Ant Workers (3) Giant Ant Soldier (1)	5
G17a	Giant Ant Workers (2) Giant Ant Queen (1)	3
G18	Large Viper (1)	2
G19	Giant Bees (9)	4
G19a	Giant Bees (2) Giant Bee Queen (1)	3+
G20	Kobolds (2)	1/3
G21	Kobolds (8) Dire Weasel (1)	4
G22	*Forbiddance* Ward (1) Lyklor Kelerandri, Elf Ghost Ftr7	7 9
R1	Zhent Guards, Human/Half-orc War1 (8)	6
R2	Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2)	2
R4	Zhent Guards, Human/Half-orc War1 (2)	2
R5	Zhent Raiders, Human/Half-orc War1 (6)	4
R6	Zhent Raiders, Human/Half-orc War1 (6)	4
R7	Fiendish Wolves (2)	2
R8	Murzim, Human Werewolf Exp1	3
R9a	Light Warhorse (1 per stall)	1 each
R9b	Padriac and Ewart, Male Human Com1	1
R9c	Axel (Light Warhorse)	2
R9e	Wild Pig (1)	2
R12	Blindness *Glyphs of Warding* (2)	4 each
R12a	Jebalek, Male Gnome Rog1/Wiz(Ill)2	3
R13	Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2)	1
R15	Capercaal, Female Human Rog2	2
R18a	Yvan, Male Human Wiz(Evo)3 Reba (Cat Familiar) Scything Blade Trap (1)	3 1
R18c	Kuspur, Male Human Wiz(Evo)1	1
R18e	Lieutenant Rogg, Male Half-orc Bbn1	1
R18f	Lieutenant Uwna, Female Half-orc Bbn1	1
R18g	Captain Malvina, Female Human Ftr2 Poison Needle Trap (1)	2 2
R19	Zhent Guards, Human War1 (2)	1
R22	Zhent Guards, Half-orc War1 (2)	1
R23c	Inialos Oakwood, Male Moon Elf Rgr1 Gwenect Moondark, Female Drow Rgr1	1
R23e	Kurudava, Male Gold Dragon Wyrmling	4
R24a	Matilde, Female Human Clr1 (Bane)	1
R24b	Suddilis, Male Human Clr3 (Bane) Xthraxix (Imp)	4
R24c	Zetta, Female Human Clr1 (Bane)	1
R25	Ghouls (3)	3
R26a-b	Zhent Sergeant, Male Human/Half-orc Ftr1 (1)	1
R27a-b	Zhent Guards, Human/Half-orc War1 (8) Zhent Sergeant, Male Human/Half-orc Ftr1 (1)	6
R28a-b	Zhent Guards, Human/Half-orc War1 (2)	2

The Cradle of Madness

A Parent's Worst Nightmare

by Robert Lee

artwork by Bob Klasnich • cartography by Robert Lee

"The Cradle of Madness" is a D&D adventure designed for four 6th-level player characters (PCs). This adventure is ideal for good-aligned PCs, and the party should include at least one cleric or paladin (perhaps of Pelor, St. Cuthbert, or Heironeous). A rogue (as well as other stealthy PCs) will prove helpful in several encounters. "The Cradle of Madness" calls for investigation, infiltration, and roleplaying, but players can also expect their fill of combat. Expect the PCs to advance at least one level during this adventure. "The Cradle of Madness" begins in the Free City of Greyhawk and appears to be a simple rescue mission at first, but the story unfolds into something far more sinister. The action moves characters out of the city for a ransom delivery, to a ruined keep in the Cairn Hills, and finally to an ancient temple of Tharizdun hidden below the keep. The adventure could happen in any city with a nearby region of hills and woodlands.

Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

Six years ago at the University of Hookhill in Bissel, a troubled history student named Elgoth secretly murdered a fellow student for humiliating him in a debate. While burying the body in the basement of the university, Elgoth discovered a crate of discarded books. One of these tomes detailed the malevolent actions of a cult desperate to release a god long ago imprisoned by the pantheon and forgotten by the common man. Elgoth studied the tome and became enthralled with the cult's failed rituals and even pitied the Dark God imprisoned eons ago; this pity was an invitation into Elgoth's soul that the Dark God gladly accepted.

The Dark God, Tharizdun, forever sleeps in his prison. Malign dreams and unholy plots against mankind seep from his mind like puss from an infected wound. Tharizdun whispered to Elgoth, promising a position of power in his dark empire to come.

For several years, Elgoth traveled the Flanaess, led by mysterious dreams and maddening visions. During this time, he recruited many followers insane enough to appreciate Tharizdun's vision of ultimate destruction. Elgoth's loyalty began to weaken after years of broken promises and vague missions, but three years ago his dreams crystallized and his mission became one of utmost importance. Elgoth was told to find a girl with red hair, violet eyes, and a birthmark over her heart matching the one on his own chest. His dreams also told him that together they would have a son that would bring hope to the followers of Tharizdun and oblivion to all things. Elgoth's son will be an unequaled visionary, the cult's new spiritual leader, and the voice of their god. Elgoth and his cult have spent the past three years searching for the mysterious girl with red hair and violet eyes—an almost impossible combination. Elgoth's dreams led them to the City of Greyhawk and revealed Lyza Danwick, the adopted daughter of a wealthy merchant family and his long-lost twin sister.

Lyza Danwick is a beautiful young woman with red hair (worn straight and combed back from her face), deep violet eyes, and lightly-freckled skin that gives her the appearance of innocence and youth. A spiral-shaped birthmark (the spiral of decay symbol of Tharizdun) appeared over her heart on her third birthday. She was adopted by Owen and Clydell Danwick at the city orphanage when she was just an infant. Elgoth was adopted by a scholar from Bissel. The twins have never been told their true histories.

The Danwicks proved to be cold neglecting parents that adopted a child only because it was fashionable for aristocrats to do so at the time. Once the social value of the child waned, so did their interest in Lyza. She was raised by uncaring maids, nannies, and tutors, growing into a bitter young lady with a deceitfully innocent smile and a taste for evil.

At the time that Elgoth was receiving news of his future son, Lyza's father was smuggling several crates of antiques into the city. Lyza noticed a small onyx statue with three deformed heads, all swallowing a single amethyst set between them. She became enthralled by the statue and devised a plot

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"The Cradle of Madness" is intended for four 6th-level characters with standard equipment. However, it can be adjusted for lower- or higher-level parties with a few modifications. Some examples are given below. Remember, changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure awarded.

3rd-level PCs: The nature of the plot does not give PCs of this level the opportunity to rest and heal as frequently as they would need to, and they would be easily destroyed by many of the encounters. Consider giving the PCs some healing potions or scrolls, and make sure they have plenty of opportunities to rest and recuperate between encounters.

Encounters of EL 6 or greater should be removed or tweaked to increase the party's chance of survival. For instance, the wraiths in area **T11** could be replaced with animated ogre skeletons or ghouls; the kurges in areas **T7** and **T16** could be replaced with gargoyles or zombies.

4th- to 5th-level PCs: PCs of this level will find the adventure challenging, and some of the encounters will be overwhelming. You will need to decrease the number and/or strength of the foes. At the Ransom Site, Yemar and Trillanian come alone (without the enforcers), lowering the EL to 5. Remove three of the monstrous spiders from area **K10**, lowering the EL to 5. Remove the guards from area **K11**, which lowers the EL to 6. Weaken the disintegrating arch trap in area **K13** so it deals 6d6 points of damage to those not wearing one of the cult's robes, with a Fortitude save for half damage, but keep the Search and Disable Device DCs the same. This changes the EL to 4. Change the ghost of Brother Artillis Segrentine in area **T8** to a 2nd- or 3rd-level cleric, lowering the EL to 4. Lower the maximum number of wraiths that can escape the orb in area **T11**. The encounter in area **T16** must change dramatically to accommodate PCs of this level. To lower the EL to 7, you can make Elgoth a 5th-level cleric, remove his kurge bodyguard, and make all of the cultists noncombative.

7th- to 8th-level PCs: To challenge PCs of this level, you will need to increase the number and/or strength of the foes. Change the *fear* trap in area **K1** to a more potent spell. (*Circle of doom*, *insect plague*, or *blade barrier* would do nicely.) Increase the crumbling tower trap in area **K3** to 8d6 points of damage, making it EL 6. The lightning blast trap in the same area can be raised to EL 5 by increasing its damage to 7d6 points. In area **K12**, the spring-loaded pendulum trap can be raised to EL 5 by making the starting damage 4d6 points. The cold zone trap can be increased to EL 5 by making the damage 6d6 points and the save DC 20. Make Muklang, the ogre-cook in area **T3**, a 6th-level fighter, raising the EL to 8. Change the guard dogs in area **T6** to four hell hounds, creating an EL 7 encounter. In area **T9**, make Bregnam an 8th-level warrior, raising the EL to 7. In area **T11**, consider having more than one wraith escape at a time, and increase the EL accordingly. The final encounter, in area **T16**, can be make more difficult by revealing the presence of the PCs before they enter the main temple or after they enter the ceremony. This ruins the element of surprise and puts them on the defensive. The encounter will also be much tougher if the collapsing temple trap does not adversely affect the cult.

to take it. Keeping the statue for herself, Lyza hid several other antiques in the housekeeper's chambers. When her father noticed the items were missing, Lyza mentioned seeing their housekeeper with one of the items only hours before. The housekeeper was arrested, and the onyx statue was thought to be lost or sold.

The onyx statue is a relic from the same temple of Tharizdun that Elgoth read about years before. It acts as a focus for Tharizdun's power and grants a cleric of Tharizdun control over the temple's guardians. To Lyza, it brought a promising voice into her lonely life, telling her exactly what she wanted to hear. Tharizdun found the perfect mother for his new ambassador of darkness.

With the Dark God's influence, the last few years have been miserable for the Danwick family. Clydell Danwick has fallen into a mysterious dementia after finding the onyx statue hidden in her daughter's room, the servants have left for happier and more stable jobs, and Owen Danwick has become paranoid and nearly insane due to the feeling of doom that hangs over his home. Consumed with taking care of his demented wife, he hardly ever leaves the estate.

The cult arrived in Greyhawk nine months ago, and Elgoth sent one of his agents into the Danwick home as a replacement housekeeper. The agent quickly realized that Lyza was already a follower of the Dark God and that she was eager to be part of his sinister plan. Elgoth crept into the home while Lord Danwick slept and conceived the Dark God's emissary with his twin sister.

Lady Danwick's dementia, the decline of the estate, and the responsibility of running a business overwhelmed Lord Danwick, allowing Lyza to keep her pregnancy a secret. For nine months, she sat alone in her room, comforted only by the mad whispers of the Dark God.

Elgoth's dreams led the cult to a ruined keep in the Cairn Hills, just east of North Hills Park. There the cult discovered an abandoned temple of Tharizdun hidden beneath the ruins. Several low-ranking cultists were destroyed by the temple's traps and guardians, but now the traps have been discovered and Elgoth has taken control of one of the temple's powerful undead sentinels.

Two nights ago, Lyza left her home with Elgoth and traveled to the temple to give birth to their child. Before leaving, Lyza devised a plan to help fund her new life with the cult and to ruin her cold, uncaring father. She had Elgoth write a ransom note in blood, demanding 50,000 gp for her safe return. He signed the note as the "Nightmare Syndicate," after the villains in an ancient Suel fairy tale. Lord Danwick would not dare go to the authorities for fear of causing Lyza's death and ruining his own reputation. More importantly, he wants to avoid Tax Inspector Bakkanin's audit of his finances if the gold is suddenly needed for the ransom.

The problem with Lyza's plan is that her father has gathered his senses long enough to try hiring a group of adventurers to investigate the abduction and find his daughter quietly—this is where the PCs come in.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs are introduced to Lord Owen Danwick, a rich merchant from Greyhawk City. He pleads with them to save his daughter Lyza from the Nightmare Syndicate, an organization that has taken her hostage and is demanding a ransom of 50,000 gp in gems before midnight the same evening. The PCs have little time to prepare before heading to the ransom site—a wooded area east of the city wall. In truth, Lyza Danwick is the mastermind of her own abduction, with the help of a cult of Tharizdun.

The PCs encounter six cloaked cult members at the ransom site and are led to the North Hills, where they discover a ruined keep. The cult has several sentries in the keep guarding the entrance to a long-forgotten temple of Tharizdun.

After defeating the sentries, the PCs make their way through the temple by disguising themselves as cultists, using stealth, or whatever means they devise. The PCs enter the chapel as Lyza is giving birth before the entire congregation, and Elgoth is leading the cult in a ritual to bond the newborn child as Tharizdun's emissary. If the PCs do not stop the ritual, the child's soul is lost to Tharizdun—bearing the symbol of the Dark God upon his forehead forever. During the battle, the onyx statue is shattered by Elgoth. The chaotic energy released by the statue tears the temple apart, and the PCs must retreat or be buried alive. To be truly successful, the heroes must stop the binding ritual, rescue the child, and escape the temple before it collapses.

Player Introduction

The party should be in the City of Greyhawk at the beginning of the adventure. Whether they are just in the city to spend some hard-earned gold from a previous adventure or they are actually based in the city is immaterial.

It is early in the year, and snow still covers the less traveled areas of the city. Owen Danwick has already started questioning innkeepers, bartenders, guild members, and other information-rich individuals about trustworthy adventurers in the city who have tight lips and ask few questions. Owen is directed to the party by an NPC they have recently encountered (an innkeeper, shopkeeper, moneychanger, or other figure), and Owen dispatches several messengers to find them. Late in the evening, while the PCs are traveling the cold streets in search of an inn with a vacancy or going to their own headquarters, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> Cold wind bites at your face as you move through the slush-covered streets of Greyhawk. Suddenly, a voice catches your attention. "I have a message for you!" shouts a thin young woman wearing the tabard of the Union of Couriers and Messengers.
>
> "Well now, this seems to be your lucky day," she says while hurrying toward you. "I don't know who you've impressed lately, but Lord Danwick seeks an audience with you. You could do worse than getting in good with one of the richest merchants in the city. If you're interested, I'll take you to him. I must say, it seems rather urgent."

If the PCs agree to meet Lord Danwick, the messenger quickly leads them to the northern end of the Low Market where a large roanwood tree grows from the center of the Processional (the main road through the city). If the PCs seem uninterested in speaking with Lord Danwick, the messenger produces a small bag containing a 50-gp gem for each PC to help convince them of Lord Danwick's intentions. After the PCs agree to meet Lord Danwick, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

> The messenger knows her way around the city quite well. After several shortcuts, you find yourselves at the northern end of a vast bazaar, but the sun has set and the shops have all closed for the day. Before you stands a great roanwood tree, scarred from years of standing at one of the busiest intersections in the city. A heavy-set man in his mid-fifties dressed in expensive gray and maroon robes paces impatiently in front of the tree. He removes his hat to acknowledge your approach but does not smile—he just stares with a hurried, troubled look. The man silently leads you toward a large, dimly lit tent and waves you inside while nervously holding the door open. After everyone is inside, he hands the messenger a small bag and quietly dismisses her. Then his attention turns toward you.
>
> "Please be comfortable and introduce yourselves," he says, motioning toward a round table with several cushioned chairs beside a low-burning fire in the center of the tent. "I am Owen Danwick. You may not know my name, but I am known by most well-to-do here in the Free City. I fear my renown has placed me and my family in grave danger, yet my contacts tell me that you might be able to help us.
>
> "I come to you out of fear for my family's welfare and my own sanity. Last night, my daughter Lyza was abducted while I slept only a few chambers away. I awoke this morning to find her gone and this letter on her pillow." He reaches into his robe with a trembling hand and pulls out a sheet of blood-stained parchment. He lays the parchment on the table and begins to read the words written upon it—scribed in blood with a clean, educated hand.
>
> *"Owen, we have taken your beautiful Lyza, but her life will be spared if you follow our directions and play this game by our rules. Bring 50,000 gold pieces in gems to the woods outside the Duke's Gate by midnight tonight. Find the broken down wagon just inside the trees, and leave the gems in the driver's seat. Bring no one and tell no one, or your daughter will beg us to release her from the nightmares she will endure. Play the game by our rules and your daughter will be returned in the morning, and you will be free of us. The Nightmare Syndicate."*
>
> Danwick raises his head slowly and takes a deep breath. "I come to you because I cannot raise the money in the time given without raising the suspicion of the Merchants' and Traders' Union and Greyhawk's unrelenting tax collector. I admit that I have been less than honest in my dealings. If my accounts are audited, the money will be confiscated and I will be imprisoned—or worse—by the Union, thus dooming my daughter to the Nightmare Syndicate's wrath. As you can see, I am out of options and time. With such short notice, I have raised 5,000 gp and a bag of flawed gems that might appear valuable to untrained eyes. I offer you the gold, or the deed to a grand house I am selling in the Artisans' Quarter, if you will follow me to the ransom site and wait for the Nightmare Syndicate to collect the gems. You could follow them back to Lyza and rescue her if they haven't already . . . I dare not say. Please, will you help us?"

Allow PC bards to make a Bardic Knowledge check (DC 15) and Suloise PCs to make an Intelligence check (DC 20). If successful, the PC recognizes that "The Nightmare Syndicate" is from an old Suloise fairy tale about a group of malevolent spirits that whisper to children in their dreams and compel them to commit evil acts. Lord Danwick had never heard of The Nightmare Syndicate before receiving the ransom note.

The PCs have only a few hours before midnight and must decide whether or not to take the job. If the party hesitates too long or asks for more money, Lord Danwick heads for the door, hoping to find another group of adventurers before it's too late. If the PCs ask to search the Danwick estate for clues, Owen reminds them that it is almost midnight and that he has already investigated Lyza's room, finding nothing but the blood-stained note.

Owen neglects to mention that Lyza is pregnant (it certainly hadn't escaped his notice). The fact simply doesn't concern him, particularly since Lyza has refused to name the father. The PCs have little time to prepare spells, buy equipment, or run to the Wizards' Guild to trade items—most shops are closed for the evening and most NPCs are unavailable.

Traveling through the City of Greyhawk is easy at this time of night, as long as the PCs stay on the Processional. The alleys are filled with cloaked figures and unsavory characters. Feel free to hinder the party with a couple of minor diversions, such as a mugging in a nearby alley, a domestic dispute that could turn violent at any moment, or a group of drunken citizens harassing the non-human members of the party.

Creatures (EL 2): Owen is heavy-set and in his mid-fifties. His hair is thinning and completely gray. He wears a well-groomed beard and expensive, comfortable clothing. Owen is unemotional and self-centered, but he is not without compassion. Although he does not love Lyza, he feels responsible for her. Much of his fortune has been made through illicit activities and Owen fears he will someday lose everything. Though Owen is a crook, he will not break a deal once it is made. Lord Danwick fights only if severely threatened. The PCs should receive no experience points for attacking him.

Owen Danwick, Male Human Ari3: CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 11 in. tall); HD 3d8; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +3 melee (1d4+1, dagger); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +7 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 12, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +8 (includes Skill Focus feat), Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9 (includes Skill Focus feat), Forgery +7, Gather Information +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Open Locks +5, Sense Motive +8. *Feats:* Iron Will, Skill Focus—Appraise, Skill Focus—Diplomacy. *Languages:* Common, Gnome, Baklunish.

Possessions: Noble's outfit, dagger, bag of flawed gems (worth 500 gp total), deed to a 6,500-gp residence in the Artisans' Quarter, 5,000 gp (kept at his estate), assets worth over 1,000,000 gp.

Ransom Site

The ransom site is marked by a broken wagon wheel that leans on a tree by the side of the road. The remains of an old buckboard wagon rests in a small clearing just 30 feet into the woods. If the PCs arrive before midnight, they have a few minutes to prepare. If they arrive with less than five minutes to spare, several cultists are in the woods—hidden and ready for almost anything.

> Thin beams of moonlight break through the dark canopy of leaves above you. Shadows dance everywhere as a north wind blows through the trees. A clearing, roughly 60 feet across, reveals a dilapidated buckboard wagon covered in vines and rotten leaves.

Elgoth has sent six cultists to retrieve the ransom and kill Owen Danwick. When Owen places the ransom on the wagon seat, Yemar and Trillanian attack. They retreat when the PCs intervene. Owen runs for cover when combat starts.

Creatures (EL 7): Elgoth has ordered that before cult members embark on dangerous missions, they must have one of their back teeth extracted and replaced with a wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (held in place with thick gum made from tree sap). Biting the pellet ensures a swift death and has saved the cult from exposure on many occasions. Most of the cult is insane and fanatic enough to sacrifice themselves in the name of the Dark God.

Trillanian secretly removed his poison-filled pellet and hid it in his component pouch. He will likely be the only cultist able to answer questions if captured. If Trillanian or one of the other cultists is captured, the PCs could use magic to learn the location of their lair. These cultists refer to their deity as the

"Dark God," "He of Eternal Darkness," "Lord of Decay," or "Emperor of Insanity."

Yemar Thallow, Male Human War3: CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 3d8+9; hp 28; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Atk +7 melee (1d8+2/crit 19-20, masterwork longsword); or +4 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills: Hide +3*, Intimidate +7, Swim +7*. *Feats:* Power Attack, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longsword). *Language:* Common. *These skill modifiers include the -1 armor check penalty for wearing studded leather armor.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, masterwork longsword, *potion of levitate,* black clothing and cloak, boltcase (20 bolts), bronze bracelet (10 gp), wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (sealed into an empty tooth socket), 21 gp in pouch.

Description: Yemar has long dark hair, dark-brown eyes, and a thin beard and mustache. Yemar is cold, never showing any emotion or compassion. He doesn't like Trillanian and gladly sacrifices his partner to save himself.

Trillanian Murdow, Male Human Wiz3: CR 3; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 3d4+3; hp 11; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +1 melee or +3 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); or +3 ranged (1d6 plus splash 1, vial of acid); SA spells, SQ spells; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills: Alchemy +9, Concentration +7, Craft (tattooing) +9, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Scry +9, Spellcraft +9. *Feats:* Alertness (from familiar), Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Scribe Scroll. *Languages:* Common, Draconic, Old Oeridian, Suloise.

Spells Prepared (4/3/2): 0—*daze* (×2), *mage hand, resistance;* 1st—*shield, sleep* (×2); 2nd—*invisibility, Melf's acid arrow.*

Possessions: Potion of darkvision, two vials of acid, dark clothing and cloak, large component pouch (home to familiar), wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (in his component pouch), 34 gp in pouch, spellbook containing all prepared spells (see above) plus *detect magic, prestidigitation, read magic, obscuring mist,* and *spider climb.*

Description: Trillanian has a thin build. His arms, back, chest, face, and bald head are covered with tattoos.

Trillanian's Familiar, Tiny Monstrous Scorpion: CR —; Tiny Vermin; HD special; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (+2 size, +4 natural); Atk +2 melee (1d2-4, 2 claws), -3 melee (1d2-4 and poison, sting); Face 2 1/2 ft. × 2 1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.; SA improved grab, poison; SQ empathic link, improved evasion, intelligent vermin, share spells, touch spells; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 3, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +15, Spot +7. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (claw, sting). Monstrous spiders gain a +8 competence bonus to Hide and Move Silently when using their webs.

SA—Poison (Ex): If the scorpion deals damage with its stinger, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC 11) after 1 minute or suffer 1d2 points of temporary Strength damage.

SQ—Intelligent Vermin (Su): Due to the scorpion familiar's magically enhanced intelligence, it is no longer immune to mind-influencing effects.

Enforcers, Male Human War2 (4): CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 2d8+4; hp 16 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail armor, +2 large shield); Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/crit 19-20, longsword), or +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb -1*, Jump -2*, Listen +3 (includes Alertness feat), Spot +3 (includes Alertness feat), Swim -1*. *Feats:* Alertness, Expertise. *Language:* Common. *These skill modifiers include the -7 armor check penalty for wearing chainmail armor and carrying a large shield.

Possessions: Chainmail armor, large steel shield, longsword, light crossbow, dark clothing and cloak, wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (sealed into an empty tooth socket).

Tactics: Yemar and Trillanian enter the woods from the north approximately five minutes before midnight, and the four enforcers hide on the edge of the woods. If the PCs have not arrived or they are hidden, Yemar and Trillanian hide on the east side of the clearing and wait for Lord Danwick. Trillanian casts *invisibility* and drinks his *potion of darkvision.* If the party is spotted, Yemar and Trillanian retreat back the way they came. In an act of defiance, Trillanian casts *Melf's acid arrow* at the closest PC before retreating.

Into the Hills

Whether the PCs interrogate Trillanian for the location of the cult's lair or they follow the trail back to its origin, they should eventually be on their way to the North Hills. Tracking the cult requires the Track feat and a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15, +6 for poor visibility if the party doesn't provide more light). Once the tracks are found, they are easy to follow for the next 30 to 45 minutes. The tracks lead through North Hills Park and east toward the edge of the Cairn Hills. North Hills Park is easily traveled due to many paths and riding trails made by the leisurely strolls of Greyhawk's nobility and younger folk.

The cult's trail stops abruptly at a bend in a sparsely traveled riding path. Many signs show that the tracks leave the path here, but the PCs only see a thick bramble of overgrown weeds and blackberry bushes before them. A successful Search or Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) reveals that the brambles are tied together and placed to hide a rough trail leading into the woods. The brambles can be moved aside by two or more PCs. Approximately 500 yards past the brambles, in a shallow valley surrounded by woods and hills, are the remains of an ancient ruined keep.

THE RUINED KEEP (Areas K1–K13)

A moss-covered moat surrounds this ancient Oeridian keep. The structure has a 10-foot-high stone wall around it that has crumbled away in some sections. A stone bridge arches over the moat, directly before a small gatehouse. The gatehouse is in horrible disrepair. One bronzewood door lies on the ground, and the other dangles on rusted hinges.

Keep Features

Unless otherwise noted, the following features are common throughout the keep.

The Woods: The woods surrounding the moat are thick with brambles, weeds, and yarpick trees. Anyone traveling into the woods suffers a -5 circumstance penalty to Move Silently checks but receives a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide checks and 50% concealment. Just north of the keep, there is a patch of yellow-green moss known as "Pelor's Hand." This moss can

be used to extract injury-inflicted poisons (+2 to any Fortitude saves after the moss is applied). A PC who succeeds at a Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) recognizes Pelor's Hand and can collect enough moss for 1d6 uses. A PC with the Profession (apothecary or herbalist) skill can collect 1d6 uses +1 use per skill rank.

The Moat: The moat averages 10-15 feet wide and 4 feet deep, and is covered with a thin layer of moss and slime. The floor of the moat mostly consists of thick mud, reducing base speed by 10 feet.

Crumbling 10-foot-high Stone Wall: 2 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot section; Break (DC 30); Climb check (DC 15). This wall was built with large fieldstones pulled from the keep's foundation and moat. The mortar holding the wall together has all but dissolved. The large stones and lack of mortar make the wall easy to climb, but there is a 10% chance each round that a stone pulls loose as someone climbs on it (Climb check at DC 15 or fall).

Main Keep Exterior Walls: 1 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot section; Break (DC 35); Climb check (DC 20). The keep's exterior walls were constructed with reddish-brown stones quarried from the moat.

Main Keep Interior Walls: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 50 per 10-foot section; Break (DC 23); Climb check (DC 25).

Reinforced Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23). These doors are made of stained bronzewood, reinforced with bands of rusted iron. They open into rooms.

K1. Bridge of Fear.

A vine-covered stone bridge arches 10 feet over the stagnant moat. Though the years have taken their toll, the bridge still looks sturdy.

Trap (EL 4): Anyone crossing the bridge must make a successful Will saving throw (DC 16) to avoid the effects of a glyph of warding that protects the middle of the bridge.

Greater Glyph of Warding (Fear): CR 4; as *fear* spell; Will save (DC 16) negates; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29).

Development: The sentries at area **K11** see anyone crossing the bridge unless they are invisible or well hidden.

K2. Broken Gates.

Two 10-foot-tall bronzewood doors once protected this gateway. Now, one door hangs precariously on rusted hinges and the other has fallen to the ground. A shattered wooden walkway hangs loosely over the doors.

If a PC disturbs the door still on its hinges, there is a 20% chance each round that it falls, dealing 1d6 points of damage to anyone behind it unless the victim makes a successful Reflex save (DC 15) to jump out of the way.

Trap (EL 1/2): Several tripwires are strung across the open gateway, hidden in high weeds and attached to small bells that alert the sentries if anyone disturbs them. Disabling the alarm by cutting the wires takes 1d4 minutes.

Alarm Wires: CR 1/2; Search (DC 18); Disable Device (DC 11).

Development: The sentries in area **K11** see anyone passing through the gateway unless they are invisible or well hidden. If the door falls or the alarm wires are hit, Ursh Bloodknuckle and the enforcers investigate.

K3. Unsafe Tower.

This tower seems to be in good repair, though the floor is slightly rotten and chunks of the roof have fallen in. A ladder on the opposite wall leads past a 15-foot-high wooden walkway and ends at a trapdoor in the roof. The walkway runs around the tower's interior, allowing access to several arrow slits and a door on the right side of the tower.

A secret compartment under the floor can be found with a successful Search check (DC 25). The cult overlooked this when they first searched the keep and decided the tower was too dangerous to use (see **Trap #1**). The compartment holds a trapped bronzewood chest (see **Trap #2**) with a finely made mithral lock. Inside the chest is the **Treasure.**

Bronzewood Chest: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break (DC 23). Striking the chest with a metal weapon triggers **Trap #2.**

Mithral Lock: Hardness 15; hp 25; Break (DC 30). Striking the lock with a metal weapon triggers **Trap #2.** Once the trap is removed, the lock can be picked with a successful Open Lock check (DC 25).

Trap #1 (EL 4): Any PC who enters this tower must make a successful Dexterity check (DC 15) each round or stumble on some of the rubble or inadvertently bump part of the structure. If this happens, there is a 30% chance that the roof and a large chunk of wall collapses. Any PCs inside the tower when it collapses must make a successful Reflex save (DC 20) to dive out of the tower, avoiding the falling debris. PCs who fail the Reflex save take 4d6 points of damage and are buried under rubble. They suffer 1d6 points of subdual damage each round they are buried. A buried PC can escape from the rubble with a successful Strength or Escape Artist check (DC 20). Note that PCs cannot take 10 or 20 on these checks, but they can re-roll each round until they escape (or suffer enough subdual damage to fall unconscious). Other characters can help rescue a buried companion by using the Cooperation rule on page 62 of the *Player's Handbook.*

Crumbling Tower Trap: CR 4; no attack roll necessary (4d6 plus buried), Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20).

Trap #2 (EL 3): The chest and mithral lock are trapped with a glyph of warding (magical lightning blast) that affects anyone who touches it without first saying the word "Debrilen."

Glyph of Warding (Lightning): CR 3; 10-ft.-radius blast (3d6); Reflex save (DC 14) avoids; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Treasure: Once the chest is opened, the PCs find the following: three potions *(cure moderate wounds, hiding, invisibility),* 315 gp, and 72 sp. The coins were minted in the Great Kingdom over 400 years ago and could be worth more to a historian or collector of antiques from the old Aerdi Empire.

Development: If this tower crumbles or the magical trap is triggered, Ursh Bloodknuckle and the enforcers investigate.

K4. Tainted Well.

A sulfurous odor rises from this moss and vine-covered well. A watery reflection can be seen approximately 30 feet down, and buzzing insects swarm around it.

Trap (EL 3): This 35-foot-deep well still gives water, but it is tainted by bacteria and parasites. Anyone drinking from this well must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract a stomach disorder resembling malaria.

Stomach Disorder: Type: ingested (DC 15); Incubation Period: 1d4+1 hours; Initial Damage: 1 Con and 1 Str (temporary); Secondary Damage: 1d3 Con and 1d3 Str (temporary).

K5. Blind Spot.

A few rafters and floor beams are all that remains of the interior of this tower. The rest has fallen to the ground in a heap.

This tower is out of the sentries' line of site. The PCs can enter here unseen, but they might be heard thanks to a pair of greyhawks (from which the city derives its name) nesting in the rafters. If anyone moves recklessly within the tower, they must make a successful Dexterity check (DC 15) or fall, taking 1d4 points of subdual damage.

Creatures (EL 2/3): If PCs enter the tower, the hawks begin squawking and swooping at them to protect their three hatchlings, hidden in a nest among the rafters.

Hawks (2): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual,* page 197.

Development: If the greyhawks are not silenced within 3 rounds, or if a PC falls in the rubble, Ursh Bloodknuckle and the enforcers investigate.

K6. New Bridge.

This small, 5-foot-wide bridge is solid and obviously newer than the rest of the keep. Muddy footprints suggest that it has been used recently.

This is where the cultist cross the moat. Kris Maldrine glances at the bridge every few minutes, so the party has a 50% chance to cross the bridge unseen. If Kris is looking when the party crosses, he sees them (unless they are hiding or invisible) and alerts the other sentries (see area K11).

K7. Empty Tower. Other than some rubble and a few fallen rafters, this tower appears empty. The northeastern corner of the tower has crumbled away, allowing one to look out onto the moat and beyond.

K8. Burial At Moat. Anyone actively looking at the moat can make a Search check (DC 15) to notice three bodies buried just below the water's surface. If the bodies are spotted, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Below a layer of thick green moss rest three badly decomposed corpses. The bodies are covered with large stones and dressed like local hunters.

Two weeks ago, these unlucky men from the Cairn Hills were poaching in North Hills Park when a storm forced them to look for shelter—unfortunately, they found the keep. The sentries captured them as they crossed the bridge in area K6. Ursh took pleasure in collecting their teeth before torturing them to death. The poor men were then dumped into the moat and weighed down with stones from area K7.

Treasure: Thinking the men too poor to have anything of wealth, the sentries neglected to search them thoroughly. One of the men has a map leading to an undiscovered crypt somewhere in the northern Cairn Hills. If the party finds the map, feel free to develop it as an adventure hook. The map has been

underwater for two weeks, and reading it should be difficult due to water damage.

K9. Stable.

This ramshackle building is in terrible shape, but you see evidence that the walls have been recently repaired.

Creatures (EL –): There are five horses here, with appropriate riding gear for each. The horses have been mistreated and are easily spooked. If anyone approaches them from behind, there is a 50% chance the horses begin kicking the walls and attacking anyone within reach. A successful Handle Animal check (DC 15) calms one horse per round.

You might award bonus XPs should the PCs free the horses and nurse them back to health.

Light Horses (5): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual,* page 197.

Development: If the horses remain spooked for more than 3 rounds, Ursh Bloodknuckle and the enforcers investigate.

K10. Spider Lair.

This tower is so filled with thick cobwebs that you cannot see more than a few feet inside. Some light filters in through holes in the roof.

If a PC enters the tower without a light source, he must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) or become held by the monstrous spiders' webs. After one round, held characters are swarmed by spiders.

Creature (EL 6): This tower is infested with normal spiders, but eight monstrous spiders also live here. These hideous vermin drop upon anyone disturbing the webs.

Medium-Size Monstrous Spiders (8): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual,* page 210.

K11. Main Keep.

The fieldstone walls of this dilapidated, two-story structure have weakened in many areas, leaving large cracks and gaping holes. Many sections of the roof have collapsed, exposing rafters and leaving shingles and planks scattered around the base of the building.

A spiral staircase (area **K12**) leading down to a hidden temple of Tharizdun is hidden under rubble in the northern end of the keep. PCs can notice the staircase with a successful Search check (DC 15). Moving the rubble requires 1d3+1 rounds and a successful Strength check (DC 10).

Creatures (EL 8): If the PCs openly approach the keep, the sentries fire their crossbows at them, then charge into melee.

A PC must make a successful Spot or Listen check (opposed by the sentries' Hide and Move Silently checks respectively) to react in the surprise round. Kris Maldrine and Ursh Bloodknuckle have their own **Tactics**.

Each sentry has a wax pellet filled with deadly black lotus extract sealed into an empty tooth socket and is willing to use it if captured to avoid interrogation.

Kris Maldrine, Male Human Rog3: CR 3; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d6+6; hp 21; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 leather armor); Atk +3 melee (1d6+1/crit 19-20, short sword); or +6 ranged (1d8+1/crit 19-20, *+1 light crossbow*); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, traps, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Balance +9, Climb +7, Craft (traps) +10 (includes Skill Focus feat), Disable Device +8, Hide +9, Innuendo +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +9, Pick Pocket +6, Search +6, Spot +6. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus–Craft (traps). *Languages:* Common, Baklunish, Orcish.

Possessions: Leather armor, black cloak, short sword, *+1 light crossbow* with 10 bolts, thieves' tools, wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (sealed into an empty tooth socket).

Description: Kris is of average height and weight, but he is terribly ugly. Frightening scars cover most of his face and right arm from being caught in a fire as a child. He is the cult's trap-maker.

Ursh Bloodknuckle, Male Half-orc Clr3 (Tharizdun): CR 3; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 3d8-3; hp 18; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Atk +0 melee (1d6-2, quarterstaff), or +4 ranged (1d4-2/crit 19-20, dagger); SA spells; SQ spells, command undead, darkvision 60 ft., insanity; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +6 (includes Iron Will feat and Insanity); Str 7, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 10, Insanity 2.

Skills: Concentration +5, Disguise +2, Bluff +1, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +4, Hide +3, Spellcraft +3. *Feats:* Iron Will, Spell Focus (Necromancy). *Languages:* Common, Infernal, Orcish.

SQ–Insanity (Ex): Clerics of Tharizdun use Wisdom + Insanity in place of Wisdom when determining bonus spells and spell DCs. They use Wisdom - Insanity for all other purposes (such as Listen checks or Will saving throws).

Spells (4/3+1/2+1, base DC = 15 + spell level): 0–*detect magic, guidance, mending, resistance;* 1st–*cause fear, doom, random action†, sanctuary;* 2nd–*hold person, silence, Tharizdun's touch†* (see "New Spell" sidebar on page 70 for details).

†Domain spells. *Domains:* Destruction (smite good 1/day; +4 attack bonus and +3 damage bonus), Madness (clarity of true madness 1/day; Ursh can use his Insanity score as a bonus on a single roll involving Wisdom, such as a Listen check or a Will saving throw, but the choice to use this power must be made before the die roll).

Possessions: Studded leather armor, black robes, quarterstaff, dagger, wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (sealed into an empty tooth socket), holy symbol of Tharizdun (an inverted two-step pyramid, or obex, carved from wood and painted purple), small pouch full of humanoid teeth.

Description: Ursh is scrawny and weak for a half-orc and far uglier than you would even expect given his race. His bald head, blackish-green teeth, pale skin, and watery-yellow eyes makes him horrifying even to others of his kind. He likes to collect teeth from his humanoid victims.

Enforcers, Male Human War2 (2): hp 16 each; see the "Ransom Site" section for complete statistics and possessions.

Guards, Male and Female Human War1 (4): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 6 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+5 chainmail, +2 large shield); Atk +2 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, longsword); or +1 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb -2*, Jump -2*, Listen +2 (includes Alertness feat), Spot +3 (includes Alertness feat), Swim -3*. *Feats:* Alertness, Expertise. *Language:* Common. *These skill modifiers include the -7 armor check penalty for wearing chainmail armor and carrying a large shield.

Possessions: Chainmail armor, large steel shield, longsword, light crossbow, dark clothing and cloak, wax pellet filled with black lotus extract (sealed into an empty tooth socket).

Tactics: Kris finds a hidden vantage point on the second floor (+7 AC bonus and a +3 Reflex save bonus due to cover). When the PCs get within 30 feet, he sneak attacks with his crossbow. If the party climbs onto the second floor, he hides and sneak attacks with his short sword when he can.

Ursh casts *sanctuary* on himself and uses his *doom* spell against any obvious spellcasters. If the party is doing well, he sneaks to the staircase leading down to area **K13**, removing the rubble hiding the stairs so he can warn the rest of the temple of intruders. Removing the rubble requires 1d3+1 rounds.

K12. Spiral Stairs.

Wide stairs made of smooth black basalt spiral downward and to the east. There are no light sources, but empty iron torch holders are set into the walls.

A trap-deactivation switch is placed at the top of the stairs, hidden behind a loose stone at waist level. Finding the loose stone requires a successful Search check (DC 25). After the stone is removed, one can pull a switch down to disarm **Traps** #1 and #2 below, but not **Trap** #3. The three traps are placed at 20 feet, 40 feet, and 60 feet (just before area **K13**).

Trap #1 (EL 3): Stepping on a hidden pressure plate causes a pendulum blade to drop from the ceiling and slash across the step with blinding speed. The blade rearms itself on the opposite side so that the trap can be triggered again. Once detected, this trap can be avoided by simply jumping the step containing the pressure plate.

Spring-loaded Pendulum Trap: CR 3; +8 melee (2d4/crit ×4); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 23).

Trap #2 (EL 3): Any good-aligned creature passing through this section (as shown on the map) triggers a 5-foot-radius blast of freezing air and flying ice shards. The blast lasts for 3 rounds, and anyone caught in the blast must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 15) or take damage. Anyone running through the "cold zone" must also succeed at a Dexterity check (DC 15) or slip and fall, suffering 1d4 points of subdual damage from the stairs. After 3 rounds, the blast abates and the trap resets itself. A successful dispel magic (cast against 14th-level magic) permanently negates the trap. The trap can also be disabled by scratching away a carefully hidden rune on one step.

Cold Zone Trap: CR 3; 5-ft. radius area (5d6 points of cold damage), Reflex save (DC 15) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

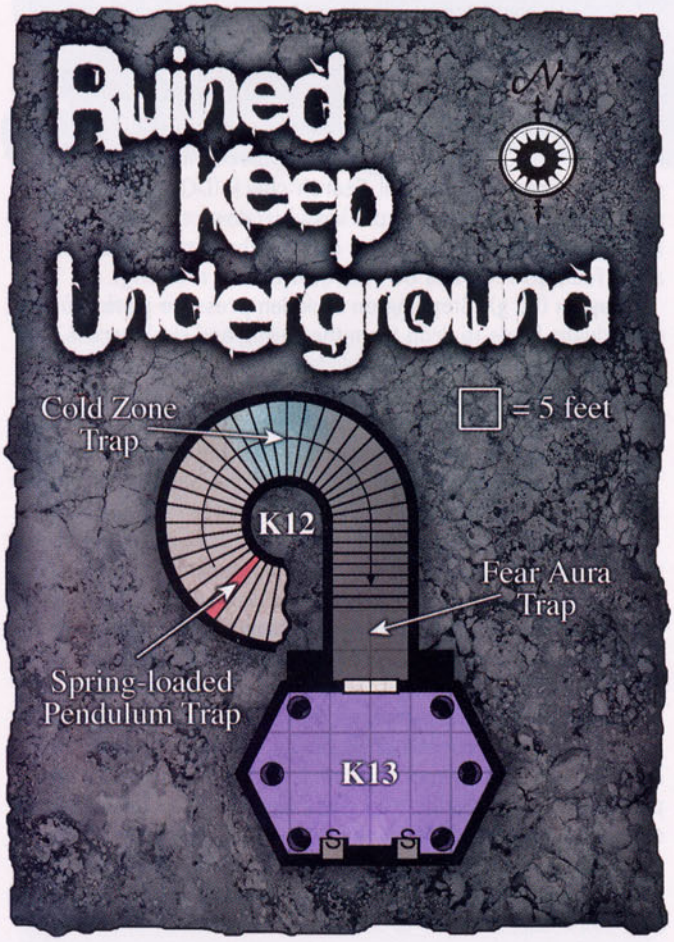
Trap #3 (EL 4): When a good-aligned creature comes within 10 feet of the doorway to area **K13**, a *greater glyph of warding* triggers a *fear* spell. The spell is meant to make unwanted visitors run from the antechamber back into the traps they just avoided or endured (see **Trap #1** or **#2** above for details). At your discretion, fleeing PCs might suffer a -2 morale penalty to AC and saves against these two traps.

Greater Glyph of Warding (Fear): CR 4; 10-ft. radius, as *fear* spell; Will save (DC 16) negates; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29).

K13. Antechamber.

The spiral stairs end abruptly at two 10-foot-high black iron doors. The doors are closed, but a faint violet light can be seen pulsing through the thin gaps between and under them. Ornate carvings of tormented faces stare at you from the surrounding stone. Strange black symbols appear on their foreheads for an instant, and then vanish. A chill fills the stairway.

The carvings are harmless but seem to stare at anyone standing before the doors. The symbols appear and vanish so quickly that only those who make a successful Spot check (DC 25) can identify them: an obex (an inverted two-step pyramid) and a chaotic spiral. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20) identifies these as symbols of the Dark God, Tharizdun. When the PCs enter area **K13**, read the following aloud:



The doors open into a hexagonal chamber with 10-foot-high walls that arch to 15 feet in the center of the room. The chamber is illuminated by a 10-foot-high, 10-foot-wide archway that glows with a swirling violet mist. Six black stone statues stand in the corners of this chamber. They are man-sized and nearly featureless, with crossed arms, blank faces, and high-collared robes covering what details the sculptor's model might have had.

A small secret door occupies either side of the arch. Behind each door is a closet containing five robes made of heavy black cloth and cut to drag on the ground. The sleeves are long and wide, allowing the wearer to cross his arms easily, leaving no exposed skin. They also have strange hoods that hang to mid-back, tapering to a point at the end. The obex symbol of Tharizdun is embroidered on the chest of each robe with dark-violet thread. If a PC passes through the arch without wearing one of the robes, he or she triggers a **Trap**.

Secret Closets: 2 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 45; Break (DC 25); Search check (DC 20) to find. These thin stone doors are opened by pushing on the upper right corner. A spring inside pushes the door outward so one can grab the edge and open it. It closes by simply pushing it back into place.

Trap (EL 7): The archway contains a special *disintegrate* trap guarding the entrance to an ancient Temple of Tharizdun. Common dust covers the floor in the chamber, but a thin layer of reddish-brown sand can be detected on the floor in front of the arch with a successful Search or Spot check (DC 25); this is the only clue that the archway might be a trap.

Anyone passing through the archway not wearing one of the cult's robes must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 20) or be *disintegrated*. If the Fortitude save is successful, the victim still suffers 5d6 points of damage. The trap can be disabled by removing two stones from the bottom of each side, and one stone from the highest point of the arch. Each stone has a Break DC of 25, a hardness rating of 6, and 30 hit points. The disintegrating arch trap can be suppressed for 1d4 rounds with a successful *dispel magic* check (DC 25, against the 14th-level magic of the trap's creator).

Disintegrating Arch Trap: CR 7; *disintegrates* victim (as the spell); Fortitude save (DC 20) for 5d6 points of damage instead; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 32).

TEMPLE OF THARIZDUN (AREAS T1-T16)

The spiral staircase and antechamber were constructed using an existing natural cave system. Followers of Tharizdun created the temple using powerful magic and captured slaves. After a decade, the temple was finished. It flourished for years, spreading fear and mistrust among the citizens of Greyhawk (then a trading post and military staging center for the powerful Oeridian Empire) until an internal power struggle within the temple's hierarchy turned violent. Several clerics of the Dark God destroyed one another for the possession of a holy relic that allowed them to cast more powerful spells and even commune directly with their lost god.

During the battle, most of the lesser cultists fled for their lives. A young acolyte escaped with the very relic the clerics were fighting for: a small onyx statue with three deformed heads swallowing an amethyst—the same statue Lyza Danwick holds today.

Temple Features

The architecture and decor of the temple pays homage to all things malevolent. Painted stones, ranging from pitch black to deep violet, are placed into the masonry walls in disturbing patterns. All doorways are decorated with carved depictions of Tharizdun and raised stonework that borders the entrance like the folded wings of a stalking fiend. The ceilings of the arched hallways are covered by painted mosaics—darkened by years of torch smoke—that seem to move and change in the corner of the viewer's eye. Unless otherwise noted, the following features are common throughout the temple:

Exterior Walls, Floor, and Ceiling: 1 ft. thick; Hardness 16; hp 360 per 10-foot section; Break (DC 65); +9 bonus to saves. The floors, exterior walls, and ceilings are made of magic and iron-reinforced stone.

Interior Masonry Walls: 1 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot section; Break (DC 35). These walls are smooth and painted in black and dark violet tones. They are difficult to climb, requiring a successful Climb check (DC 20). Iron torch holders are set into the walls at 30-foot intervals.

Reinforced Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break (DC 20). These doors are made of dark-stained oak, reinforced with bands of black iron. The doors open into rooms and have a 1-foot ring set in the center, just above the locks.

Door Locks: Hardness 10; hp 10; Break (DC 25); Open Lock (DC 22). Locks are placed in the center of the doors (just under the pull-rings) and can be unlocked with Elgoth's master key or a few duplicates that have been given to specific cultists and guards (specified with each encounter). Only a few important doors in the temple are locked.

Secret Doors: 3 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 45; Break (DC 28); Search check (DC 20) to find. These heavy stone doors are activated by pushing a nearby stone to the right of the door. Finding the activation stone requires a successful Search check (DC 25). Once activated, the secret door drops back a few inches into the wall and slides to the left. The door must be manually pushed back into place, requiring a successful Strength check (DC 12).

Lighting: The temple is dimly lit by magical globes placed on the ceilings of corridors and chambers. These globes radiate a violet glow in a 10-foot radius, but it is hardly enough to read by. The darkness causes a 10% miss chance to all attacks, unless the attacker has an alternate light source, low-light vision, or darkvision.

Scent: The air here is stale and carries the odor of decay and mold. The odor is not overwhelming, but newcomers are aware of it for some time.

Unhallowed: Long ago, upon the temple's completion, the first high priest cast an *unhallow* spell that covered the entire temple. The spell is still active (see the *Player's Handbook*, page 268, for effects of the spell).

T1. Reversed Antechamber.

This dark chamber is dimly illuminated by the violet portal. Six familiar statues stand in the corners of this chamber, this time with arms outstretched as if to strangle you. Across the room from the portal is an archway leading to a flight of stairs that descends to a dark hallway. Many cheerful voices can be heard echoing from the hallway—their direction indiscernible without descending the stairs.

A PC can step back into area **K13** unharmed whether he is wearing one of the cult's robes or not (the disintegrating arch is a one-way trap). The statues comprise a magical **Trap**.

A rowdy group of cult members has just finished a dinner (in area **T3**) celebrating the arrival of the Dark God's emissary. The cultists are heading toward the main temple (area **T16**) to witness the joyous event.

Trap (EL 6): If any good-aligned PC comes within 5 feet of the statues, the arms of each statue transform into 10-foot-long black tentacles and attack. The tentacles act exactly like the spell *Evard's black tentacles* cast by a 10th-level sorcerer, except there are only two tentacles per statue. The statues themselves do not animate, but destroying a statue dispels its tentacles immediately. The tentacles can be suppressed for 1d4 rounds with a successful *dispel magic* check (DC 21).

If a tentacle hits with an attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. A grappled victim sustains 1d6+4 points of damage each successive round.

Black Tentacles (2 per statue, 12 total): hp 10 each; AC 16; Atk +10 melee (1d6+4); Reach 10 ft.; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 19.

Statues (6): 1 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 180 each; Break (DC 25). Destroying a statue dispels its tentacles.

Development: The cultists hear any sounds of combat emanating from this room, alerting a squad of 1 enforcer and 1d4+2 guards who investigate in 1d4 rounds (see area **T16** for statistics). If any guards escape the encounter, they rush to the main temple (area **T16**) to alert Elgoth and the rest of the cult. Elgoth then orders all remaining enforcers and guards to find and destroy the interlopers. Any enforcers or guards defeated here should be subtracted from those encountered later in the main temple.

T2. Storage. This closet contains cloaks, gloves, scarves, and other common clothing, all Medium-sized. Other items might be here, at your discretion.

T3. Feast Hall.

This feast hall has seen recent use. A warm glow fills the room, cast by several torches held in cast-iron wall sconces and an elaborate candelabra placed on a huge dining table that dominates the room. The table is covered with a half-eaten banquet and surrounded by exquisitely crafted chairs with high backs and violet leather cushions. The smell of roasted pork, sautéed mushrooms, and expensive wine fills the air. A small stage sits in one corner of the feast hall. A closed door shares one wall with the stage. A set of doors leads out of the chamber on the opposite side from the stage. These doors obviously open either way, resembling those you have seen in a tavern's kitchen.

The cultists recently finished a celebration dinner honoring Lyza's unborn child: the Dark Messiah. The temple's chef (see **Creature** below) enters the feast hall one round after the PCs to begin cleaning off the tables. There are a few valuable items in the room, described under **Treasure**.

Creature (EL 5): Muklang the ogre was brought into the cult two years ago when Elgoth found him wounded and dying in the hills north of Verbobonc. Unless the party has made a lot

of noise in the feast hall, Muklang is surprised when he enters. Each PC must make a successful Listen check (DC 15) to avoid being surprised by Muklang's abrupt entrance. If the PCs are not wearing the robes from area **K13**, Muklang realizes they are outsiders and starts screaming for help. If the PCs are wearing the robes, there is a chance Muklang assumes they are cultists arriving late. If the PCs ask too many questions or behave suspiciously, have Muklang make a Sense Motive check (opposed by the PCs' Bluff check) to discover their ruse. Muklang's combat **Tactics** are detailed below.

Muklang the Cook, Male Ogre Ftr3: CR 5; Large Giant (8 ft. tall, 500 lb.); HD 4d8+8 (ogre) plus 3d10+6 (Ftr); hp 57; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft. (bad leg); AC 16 (-1 size, -2 Dex, +5 natural, +4 chain shirt); Atk +12/+7 melee or +9 ranged (1d6+5/crit ×3, cleaver with Weapon Focus feat); Reach 10 ft.; SA spice cloud; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +11 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +0, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 6, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +4*, Craft (cooking) +3, Listen +2, Spot +2. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (cleaver). *Languages:* Common, Giant. *Includes -2 armor check penalty for chain shirt.

SA—Spice Cloud (Ex): As a full attack action, Muklang can dig into his spice pouch and hurl a handful of mixed spices, creating an eye-irritating cloud of spice in a 5-foot area. Any creatures in the area must make a successful Reflex save (DC 12) or be blinded for 1d2 rounds.

Possessions: Chain shirt, leather apron, large cleaver, pouch of spices (3 handfuls).

Tactics: Muklang is more intelligent than most ogres. As soon as he realizes the PCs are not cultists, he attempts to flee. He can easily turn over a dining table to use as cover from missile fire. He also uses his spices to blind anyone blocking the door. Though his right leg was crippled years ago, he is still a capable fighter. Muklang doesn't want to die, but he will do anything to protect the cult and himself.

Treasure: The banquet table is made of stained mahogany and is worth 160 gp. The candelabra is worth 30 gp, and the silver platter holding the roast pig could easily bring 25 gp.

Development: Loud noises in this area attract the attention of the guard dogs in area **T6**. The dogs growl and scratch on the door when combat begins, becoming more agitated as the melee unfolds. A successful Listen check (DC 8) is required to hear the dogs. If anyone the dogs do not recognize opens the door, they attack.

T4. Kitchen.

This dirty and disorganized kitchen is warmed and lit by a low fire burning in a large hearth, which takes up most of the far wall. An oversized iron pot hangs by chains inside the hearth, and an assortment of spice jars, cutlery, and miscellaneous cooking utensils hang from the fireplace by leather straps. A table strewn with vegetables rests against one wall. A long bench has been pushed beneath the table.

There are several items scattered around this kitchen that the PCs might find useful: eight shards of flint, two lamps (both contain a full pint of oil), two whetstones, a cord of wood, cutlery, assorted spices, a cookbook, and a set of fireplace tools (small iron shovel, poker, and so forth).

T5. Storage.

Barrels, crates, baskets, and sacks are piled precariously in this room. White powder covers the floor.

This storage room holds dry goods and foodstuffs. The white powder on the floor is from a bag of flour that burst yesterday and has yet to be cleaned. There are five barrels, three casks, four crates, eleven baskets, and seven sacks in the room that hold the **Treasure**.

Trap (EL 1): The crates are stacked in an unstable manner. If a PC disturbs the crates in any way, they fall. All PCs within 5 feet of the crates are in danger. One of the crates is filled with bottles of fine wine. The bottles break if the crates fall, splashing anyone damaged by the crates with a rather aromatic red wine. The wine also stains clothing. The hazard can be disabled by simply pushing the crates into a more stable position, but this requires a successful Dexterity check (DC 11).

Falling Crates: CR 1; 2d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 13) to avoid; Search (DC 12); Disable Device (n/a).

Treasure: Three barrels hold clean water (one of which is almost empty), another barrel is filled with pickles, and the last barrel is half-filled with jellied eels. The jellied eels are a delicacy from the Highfolk region. They are quite tasty if one can get past the smell and look of the slimy creatures. Muklang the ogre cook has hidden three gems in a small sack at the bottom of this barrel (a 50-gp carnelian, a 75-gp amethyst, and a 500-gp black pearl).

Two casks contain excellent brandy from Keoland. The last cask holds a harshly spiced rum from the town of Hardby. Two of the four crates are filled with salted meats (shipped here from Greyhawk City), one is packed with a variety of cheeses, and the last crate contains sixteen bottles of red wine from Verbobonc. All but five of these bottles automatically break if the crates fall (see **Trap** above). Each bottle is worth 10 gp (or as much as 20 gp to a lover of fine wines). The baskets are filled with vegetables and a few rare fruits from the southern Flanaess. The seven sacks hold common ingredients such as salt, sugar, flour, and oats.

T6. Dormitory.

The following boxed text assumes that the guard dogs are not alerted by the sounds of combat in area **T3** and are not waiting on the other side of the door. Modify the description accordingly if the dogs are waiting for someone to open the door.

Ten bunk beds stand against the wall. Each is covered by a heavy wool blanket and pillow. A small wooden table sits to the right of each bunk bed. Atop each table is a simple oil lamp, a porcelain wash basin, and an assortment of miscellaneous personal items. A small wooden chest is placed beneath each table. The ceiling is dominated by a huge violet symbol resembling a swirling vortex that seems to move ever so slightly. A door on the far wall is blocked by a table. A blanket is stuffed under the foot of the door, and folds of cloth are placed into the cracks surrounding it. Angry growls echo from the darkness beneath several bunk beds.

This chamber houses twenty cultists. Another ten members have been recruited since the cult's arrival, but most of them live in or around the city.

The miscellaneous items on the tables are worthless (a pair of broken spectacles, a dried-up quill, a false eye, and so forth). The wooden chests beneath the tables are all locked and contain the personal items of the cultists. There is nothing valuable in most of the chests, as the cultists tithe everything to Tharizdun, but a few cultists are greedy enough to keep a little **Treasure** for themselves.

Wooden Chest: 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 8; Break (DC 15).

Lock: Hardness 10; hp 25; Break (DC 30); Open Lock check (DC 24).

The door to area **T7** is locked and sealed with a blanket and strips of damp cloth. Forcing open the door releases a foul odor like rotting meat.

Creatures (EL 2): The six trained guard dogs here attack any intruders entering the room. It doesn't matter whether the PCs are wearing the cult's robes, as the dogs know the cultists by scent and are trained to attack anyone not accompanied by a cultist. A druid or ranger must make a successful Animal Empathy check (DC 20) to convince the dogs not to attack. If anyone else approaches the dogs or disturbs the contents of the room, the druid or ranger must succeed at another Animal Empathy check (DC 25). If this check fails, the dogs attack.

Guard Dogs (6): hp 6 each; *Monster Manual,* page 195.

Treasure: Out of the ten chests in the room, only three hold anything valuable. Chest #1 has 35 gp and a gold ring with the engraved head of a unicorn (225 gp). Chest #2 has 100 gp and two smokesticks (20 gp each). Chest #3 has 25 gp and a *potion of hiding.*

T7. Crumbling Room.

The door creaks open, revealing a room shrouded by darkness and a pungent green vapor that causes your eyes to water. The air is thick with the odors of cinnamon and decay.

Umbrax vapor (a subterranean gas with a cinnamon odor) seeps into the room through several cracks in the walls. A kurge hides in the vapor, attacking the first PC it sees.

Creature (EL 6): Long ago, the temple's high priest had two kurges as bodyguards. After the high priest's murder, the temple was abandoned and the bodyguards were left behind to stalk the dark halls. When they first arrived, a few cultists fell victim to these creatures. Elgoth was able to gain control of one kurge and with its help trapped the other in this room.

If the kurge drags a PC into the room or the PC enters of her own volition, she must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or fall victim to the umbrax vapor.

The entire temple is under the effects of an *unhallow* spell, so all turning checks suffer a -4 profane penalty and the kurge is treated as if affected by a *magic circle against good.*

The kurge first appeared in "Children of Tharizdun" by James Jacobs (*Dragon Magazine Annual* #5, pages 32-37).

Kurge (1): hp 53; see "New Creature" description at the end of the adventure.

Trap (EL 4): Any living, breathing creature that enters the room must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) each round to avoid inhaling the umbrax vapors. Each failed roll deals 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage and causes the affected creature to become nauseated (see "Condition Summary" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 85).

A PC can attempt to rescue a companion who is nauseated by going into the vapor and pulling him free. The rescuer scores an automatic touch attack (no attack roll required), but the vapor affords one-half concealment (20% miss chance). Nauseated characters are attacked by the kurge.

Umbrax Vapor: CR 4; 1d4 points of temporary Strength damage per round plus nausea; Fortitude save (DC 15) negates.

Development: If the PCs leave this room without destroying the kurge and the door is left open, it creeps out of the room to stalk and slay its liberators.

T8. Library.

Several small globes illuminate this chamber with a pale-white light. Each globe rests in the mouth of a bizarre iron base that resembles a deformed head straining to swallow it. The bases rest atop tall bookshelves packed with moldy tomes. A large oak table dominates the center of the room. Upon the table rests a large tome with a deep-violet cover, another lit globe in an iron fixture, an empty wine glass, and an ornate hairbrush.

The light-globes are simple glass spheres enchanted with weak *continual flame* spells, each illuminating only a 10-foot radius. They are easily removed from the morbid iron stands but are very fragile (Hardness 1; 1 hp).

The books in this library hold a fortune in forgotten knowledge. Many of them cover ancient Flanaess history, such as the migration of the Suel Empire into the region, the rise and fall of the Aerdy Empire, and even speculative works on the attempted assassination of the Arch-Lich Vecna by his trusted lieutenant, Kas the Destroyer. Feel free to create titles, topics, and values for the books in this library. Other tomes hold vague or twisted recollections of past cultists' dreams and nightmares, kept as a reference for future followers of Tharizdun who search for signs and portents from the past.

The book on the table is a record of one cleric's dreams. The cleric, Artillis Segrentine, was known for his vivid precognitions relating to the cult of Tharizdun. In 291 CY, he "saw" the coming of the Dark God's emissary and wrote it down with the rest of his visions. If a PC studies Artillis's diary, they find the following reference to the birth of this "emissary."

Patchwall 18, 291
Last night I witnessed something wonderful yet disturbing. I dreamt that a new spiritual leader will be born into the cult. His mother will be a beautiful young woman with hair like fire and eyes like amethysts, his father, her brother, a worshiper of the Dark One with similar features. The birth will happen in this sacred temple, before those who truly revere the Dark God. After the child is born, a ceremony will begin to bind him as the Dark God's emissary. My dream ended in a flash of steel and a cold dark mist. Woefully, I fear that I will not live to see this glorious day, for something tells me this child–this messiah–will someday awaken the Dark God from his eternal slumber.

Brother Artillis Segrentine

Creatures (EL 6): In life, Brother Artillis was cruel, strong-willed, and evil to the core. His drive to see his dreams unfold turned him into a ghost and bound him to this library. He hides in the Ethereal Plane, hoping to overhear news of his prophecies from those who enter. If anyone attempts to damage his book or remove it from the library, Artillis manifests in front of the door, locks it with his free *telekinesis* action, and casts *desecrate* with his partial surprise action. On the next action, he attacks the PC holding or harming the book. If the book is left atop the desk, Artillis stops attacking and fades back into the shadows. If a cleric tries to turn him and is rebuffed, Artillis instantly attacks her for daring to use another deity's influence in a temple of Tharizdun. The entire temple is under the effects of an *unhallow* spell, so all turning checks suffer a -4 profane penalty and the ghost is treated as if affected by a *magic circle against good.*

Artillis cannot leave the library and can be put to rest only if the temple is destroyed (see "Concluding the Adventure") or Elgoth's ritual to bind Lyza's child as Tharizdun's emissary succeeds (see area **T16**).

Artillis Segrentine, Male Human Ghost Clr4 (Tharizdun): CR 6; Medium-Size Undead (Incorporeal); HD 4d12; hp 30; Init +0; Spd 30 ft, fly 30 ft (perfect); AC 13 (+3 deflection); Atk +3 melee (1d4, corrupting touch); or +5 ranged (1d3, flying books); SA manifestation, spells, domain powers, corrupting gaze; SQ rejuvenation, spells, undead, incorporeal, +4 turn resistance, darkvision 60 ft., insanity; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +7 (includes Iron Will feat); Str –, Dex 10, Con –, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 16, Insanity 2.

Skills: Concentration +7, Craft (bookbinding) +6, Diplomacy +7, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +11, Scry +6, Search +10, Spellcraft +8, Spot +11. *Feats:* Extra Turning, Iron Will, Spell Focus (Enchantment). *Languages:* Common, Old Oeridian, Infernal.

Spells (5/4+1/3+1, base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance* (×2), *read magic, resistance;* 1st—*bane*, cause fear, command*, protection from good†, sanctuary;* 2nd—*desecrate, hold person*, silence, Tharizdun's touch†* (see "New Spell" sidebar on page 70 for details).

*Because of the Spell Focus (Enchantment) feat, base DCs against these spells are DC 15 + spell level.

†Domain Spells. *Domains:* Evil (casts evil spells as Clr5), Madness (clarity of true madness 1/day; Artillis can use his Insanity score as a positive modifier on a single die roll involving Wisdom, such as a Listen check or a Will saving throw, but the choice to use this power must be made before the die roll).

SQ—Insanity (Ex): Clerics of Tharizdun use Wisdom + Insanity in place of Wisdom when determining bonus spells and spell DCs. They use Wisdom - Insanity for all other purposes (such as Listen checks or Will saving throws).

Treasure: Most of the books in this room are worthless, but 2d6 of them are worth 2d10 × 10 gp (average 100 gp).

T9. Interrogator.

A low-burning lantern hang from a spike in one wall, and the stench of body odor and alcohol permeates the room. A large cot rests against the far wall, its frame straining under the weight of the incredibly large man sleeping on it. His snores echo loudly through the chamber, and his left leg hangs limply to the floor. His massive right hand grasps a tankard of wine, some of which has spilled upon his chest during his slumber. An ornately decorated mace sits on a nearby table, beside the remains of an undercooked ham, a greasy dagger, and an uncorked wine bottle. A large steel shield rests against the cot, inches from the man's greasy head. A wooden pegboard on the wall holds a single key on an iron ring.

Captured enemies of the cult are brought before the temple's jailer, Bregnam (see **Creature** below) and locked in area **T9a** until he is ready to interrogate them. After the interrogation, which takes place in area **T10**, prisoners are taken to area **T16** and sacrificed.

Bregnam is currently drunk and sound asleep. If the PCs approach him, they notice the puss-filled blisters covering his skin. If awakened, he instinctively reaches for his mace and shield, both of which are magical. Any PC attempting to pilfer one or both magic items must succeed at a Move Silently check opposed by Bregnam's Listen check. (Bregnam suffers a -5 penalty to his roll if he's asleep.) Loud noises automatically cause the jailer to awaken.

The key on the pegboard opens the cell door (area **T9a**).

Creature (EL 4, 5 if Bregnam is sober): Bregnam is a fat, slobbering behemoth of a man. In his inebriated state, he suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to Dexterity and attack rolls. Bregnam is also infected with the bubbling pussties, a foul skin disease (see below).

Bregnam, Male Human War6: CR 4 (5 when sober); Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. 4 in. tall, 450 lbs.); HD 6d8; hp 39; Init -3 (Dex) while inebriated; Spd 10 ft.; AC 17 (-1 Dex, +5 chainmail, +3 *+1 large shield)* or 15 (-3 Dex, +5 chainmail, +3 *+1 large shield)* while inebriated; Atk +13/+8 melee or +9/+4 melee while inebriated (1d8+6, *+2 heavy mace* with Weapon Focus feat); or +10/+5 melee or +6/+1 melee while inebriated (1d4+4, metal tankard); SA disease; SQ obesity; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +1 (-1 while inebriated), Will +3; Str 18, Dex 8 (4 while inebriated), Con 10, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10 (4 while diseased).

Skills: Intimidate +10 (+7 while diseased), Listen +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy mace). *Language:* Common.

SA—Disease (Ex): Bregnam has a rare skin disease known as the bubbling pussties by some homeless people in Greyhawk City's Slum Quarter. Any PC who touches the blisters on his exposed flesh must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract the disgusting disease.

Bubbling Pussties: Onset 1d4 hours; reduces Charisma by 2d4 points for 2d4 days, after which time those infected must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) each day to overcome the disease. When the disease is finally overcome, a final Fortitude save (DC 15) must succeed or the infected character's Charisma is permanently lowered by 1d4 points due to scaring from the puss-filled blisters.

SQ—Obesity (Ex): Bregnam's speed is reduced by 10 ft., and he can engage in strenuous activity only for a number of rounds equal to half his Constitution score (5 rounds) before becoming fatigued (see "Condition Summary" in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 83).

Possessions: Chainmail armor, *+1 large steel shield, +2 heavy mace,* metal tankard.

Description: Bregnam has not bathed for over a year. His unkempt black beard and mustache carry samples from meals

Temple of Tharizdun
= 5 feet
T1
T2
T3
T4
T5
T6
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T8
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T9a
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T12a
T13
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T15
T16
N

eaten weeks ago, and his clothing is stained with various pungent liquids. Bregnam's demeanor is as vile as his appearance. He is shunned by most of the cultists, although Elgoth finds his talents useful on occasion.

Tactics: As soon as Bregnam is able to react, he throws the wine left in his tankard into the eyes of the closest opponent (blinding them for a round if they fail a Reflex save at DC 12), then slams them with the tankard as he gets up from the cot. He then grabs his mace and shield. He will not hesitate to flip the table over on a PC, perhaps knocking them prone and covering them with pork grease. If Bregnam is overwhelmed by the PCs, he flees to area **T10**, where he uses the block-and-tackle system against the PCs or takes Conrad hostage while bargaining for his own life.

Treasure: Bregnam keeps a small pouch containing a *potion of cure light wounds* and 110 gp hidden in his pillow. Anyone touching the pillow must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract the bubbling pussties (see above).

T9a. Dungeon. The key on the pegboard in area **T9** unlocks this door, although it could be forced open.

Iron-Reinforced Wooden Cell Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40; Break (DC 30). The door opens into the cell and can be closed by pulling a 1-foot-diameter iron ring set into its center. A metal bar is then slid across two metal brackets and locked with a heavy padlock.

Heavy Padlock: Hardness 10; hp 40; Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25).

The stench of death fills this dank cell. A naked corpse lies in a heap in the far right corner.

The corpse is a deceased cultist from the City of Dyvers named Stefan. Stefan's anticipation to see the birth of the Dark Messiah drove him to disobey Elgoth. He followed the cult to Greyhawk after being ordered to stay in Dyvers to prepare a safehouse. Stefan serves as an example to other cultists who would ignore Elgoth. PCs inspecting the corpse notice that its fingertips are cracked and bloody from scratching at the cell door in a pathetic effort to escape.

T10. Torture Chamber.

The smell of burning coals, lantern oil, and cooked meat fills this chamber. A shallow pit of coals in the center of the room sheds a deep red glow.

An iron rack hangs above the coals on an elaborate block-and-tackle system. Chained to the rack, a half-elf moans in agony. A comfortable leather chair with an iron poker leaning against it rests near the coal pit. A cask with the top removed sits beside the chair, with what appears to be a ladle or large spoon dipped into it. Instruments of torture hang from the dark walls like macabre trophies, and rusted chains crawl through an ingenious gear system along the ceiling like vipers in a dark forest.

The man on the rack is Conrad Oakenbow, a half-elf ranger (see **Creature**). He is barely conscious and in unbearable pain, but trying to get him off the rack could become a **Trap** for him and the PCs. The leather chair reeks of sweat and alcohol; Bregnam has obviously spent a lot of time in it. The open cask is filled with lantern oil that Bregnam enjoys spooning onto the coals while victims roast on the rack. Instruments of torture hang on the walls and sit unused in the corners of the room. Everything from thumbscrews to masterwork vivisection tools can be found here.

Trap (EL 5): The block-and-tackle system controlling the iron rack is confusing. To move Conrad away from the coals, a PC must make a successful Disable Device check (DC 25).

If a PC rolls 15-24 on the Disable Device check (failing the check), a heavy chain with an iron hook releases from one of the corners. The chain swings across the room toward the center of the pit and at one randomly determined PC within 5 feet of it. Any PC struck by the swinging chain takes damage from the chain and must succeed at an opposed Strength check against the chain (17 Strength) to avoid being knocked into the coal pit.

If a PC rolls less than 15 on the Disable Device check, the loose chain is released (as above) and the iron rack holding Conrad plunges into the hot coal pit. Strapped to the rack, the helpless half-elf automatically takes damage from the coals.

Complex Pulley System with Swinging Chain: CR 3; +10 melee (2d6/crit ×3), opposed Strength check (against Str 17) or be knocked into the coal pit (see below); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25).

Pit of Burning Coals: CR 3; 4d6 points of damage per round; Climb check (DC 10) to escape the pit. Each flammable item worn or carried must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) or take damage equal to the amount dealt to the PC (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 86).

Creature (EL 4): Conrad noticed that someone had taken up residence in the ruined keep and was captured by the sentries while trying to get a better look. He has been here for three days and tortured for two. If rescued and healed, he gathers his equipment that is piled in the corner and offers to help the PCs. If the PCs cannot heal him, he gathers his stuff, gives them six vials of holy water to show his gratitude, and uses what energy he has left to escape from the temple.

Experience points should be given for rescuing Conrad, not fighting him.

Conrad Oakenbow, Male Half-elf Rgr4: CR 4; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 4d10+4; hp 33 (currently 2); Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk +6 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, masterwork longsword); or +4 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, masterwork longsword), +3 melee (1d6+1/crit ×3, handaxe); or +8 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, shortbow); SA Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting (in light or no armor); SQ half-elf, favored enemy (undead), spells; AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Animal Empathy +7, Intuit Direction +7, Listen +8 (includes Alertness feat), Search +5, Spot +8 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +10. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Track. *Languages:* Common, Elven.

Spell Prepared (1, DC = 13 + spell level): 1st—*magic fang.*

Possessions: Studded leather armor, masterwork longsword, handaxe, shortbow, quiver with 14 arrows, explorer's outfit, eight vials of holy water. None of these items are currently in Conrad's possession; rather, they have been heaped in a corner of the room.

Treasure: The PCs can loot Conrad's gear if the ranger dies or is left to his dark fate. The room holds little else of value.

T11. Crypt. The door to this room is locked, and Elgoth has the only key (area **T16**). Touching this door reveals that it is much colder than the rest of the temple.

A deep-violet glow emanates from four iron braziers placed in the corners of this chamber. Semicircular stairs lead down approximately 10 feet to a black marble floor. A dozen sarcophagi fill the room, each built atop a granite bier. A path of violet tiles leads across the room to a 10-foot-high balcony accessed by a sweeping flight of stairs to either side. On the balcony, a globe the size of a human head rests upon a marble pedestal. Pulsing light illuminates the balcony as dark figures shift within the globe like oil in turbulent water.

The temple's architects realized that they might never be able to awaken the Dark God, so they trapped the souls of their high clerics so future generations could enter this crypt in search of knowledge. The globe cannot be removed from the pedestal nor can it be broken. It is a variant of the *forcecage* spell and is affected only by certain powerful magic items and spells, including *disintegrate* (see *Player's Handbook*, page 207).

Creature (EL 5 per wraith): Six wraiths are trapped inside the globe. Any intelligent creature touching the globe must make a Will save (DC 18). A failed save indicates that a wraith has used the creature's life energy as a conduit to escape from the globe; the creature must then succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or suffer 1d6 points of temporary Constitution drain as the wraith passes through its body to freedom.

If the Will save succeeds, the wraith remains trapped in the globe. A shadowy face forms in the globe, telepathically offering to answer one question. The spirit of the high priest is compelled to answer the question to the best of its ability. The spirit is not omniscient, however; it can answer only questions relating to past cult activities, the temple, or another subject it knew in life. Remember, the entire temple is under the effects of an *unhallow* spell, so all turning checks suffer a -4 profane penalty and the wraiths are treated as if affected by a *magic circle against good*. The wraiths cannot be turned, commanded, or rebuked while trapped in the globe.

Wraiths (6): hp 32 each; see *Monster Manual*, page 185.

Treasure: Opening the sarcophagi, the PCs find the following items scattered among the bones and dust of the dead: 1,100 gp in mixed coins, a necklace with a jade stone set between two gold dragon heads (235 gp), a gold ring with a platinum star inset (320 gp), a suit of masterwork scalemail, and a pair of *gauntlets of fumbling* that appear to be *gauntlets of ogre power*.

T12. Elgoth's Chamber. The door is locked, and Elgoth keeps the key in his belt pouch. When the PCs enter the room, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

This chamber is well lit and warm compared to the rest of the temple. A short hallway leads to a large bedroom and office with a high-vaulted ceiling. A disturbing mural covers the walls and ceiling of the hall, depicting unspeakable acts of depravity witnessed by a sinister, faceless form. Beyond the hallway, the chamber takes on a different mood—one of order, professionalism, and tasteful luxury. A lush purple carpet covers the floor. Several thick black candles burn in brass holders mounted on the walls. A polished sablewood desk and a high-backed leather chair dominate one corner. A stack of paper, writing utensils, and an oil lamp are neatly organized on the desk. Along the center wall stands a grand sablewood wardrobe decorated with brass inlays, door handles, and hinges. An elegant and neatly made canopied bed stands against another wall. Beside the bed rests a comparatively dull armoire, behind which hangs a beautiful tapestry.

The black candles on the walls are neatly trimmed so that no wax drips on the carpet. The sablewood desk is over two centuries old yet remains in fantastic condition. It has a shallow drawer and a deep drawer on either side of the sitting area. All four drawers are locked (Elgoth has the keys), though there is little of interest inside them.

Sablewood Desk: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 30).

Drawer Locks: Hardness 10; hp 25; Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 20).

A secret door behind the desk leads down a flight of stairs to a small area behind the stage in the main temple (area **T16**). Elgoth uses this passage to escape with the newborn emissary if threatened in the main temple. This secret door is well designed, uncommonly difficult to find, and opened by pulling a nearby brass candleholder mounted to the right of the door. Once activated, the secret door drops back a few inches into the wall and slides to the left. The door must be manually pushed back into place, requiring a successful Strength check (DC 10). Once the door is back in place, the candleholder snaps back into position.

Well Hidden Secret Door: 3 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 30; Break (DC 28); Search check (DC 30).

The sablewood wardrobe is newer than the desk but made to complement it. The wardrobe is unlocked and contains several outfits ranging from simple traveling clothes to an ensemble of noble outfits (worth 200 gp total).

The canopied bed could comfortably sleep four people. It is the one item in the room that seems overindulgent. The small, unremarkable armoire is nearby for convenience only. A silk blindfold lies neatly folded in its drawer.

A sliding door opens to a comfortable lavatory. A bowl of mints sits on an intricately painted wash basin. A water-filled washtub sits at the far end of the room.

The Baklunish tapestry covers a secret door that opens to the cult's treasury (area **T12a**). This secret door is identical to the one behind the desk (see above), but once this door is open, the entrance is protected by a formidable **Trap**.

Trap (EL 3): A negative energy globe is triggered if anyone attempts to walk into the treasury without first speaking the phrase, "My eyes see only the darkness of Tharizdun." Any living creature that fails to speak the phrase triggers the trap, and everyone in a 20-foot-radius of the doorway is threatened. A rogue who notices the trap can attempt to disarm it by scraping a thin layer of blood and ash away from the inside of the door frame. Disarming this trap requires 2d6+10 minutes (-1 round per level of the rogue(s) disarming the trap).

Negative Energy Globe: CR 3; 20 ft. radius; 5d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 15) halves damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25). A *negative energy protection* spell negates all damage to the protected individual.

T12a. Treasury.

Crowded shelves line the walls of this dark room. Several things stand out on the shelves: four cloth sacks placed beside one another, a small wooden box with a deep scratch across its top, a large oil painting depicting a jovial man wearing a woman's feathered hat, a silver lamp with a pearl-inlaid handle, a scratched-up quiver containing six arrows, and an ivory scrollcase bound with a thin leather strip.

This room contains most of the wealth the cult acquired as it traveled to Greyhawk. Feel free to add mundane items as you see fit. Items of value are detailed below, under **Treasure**.

Treasure: Each of the four cloth sacks contains a different type of coin: 5,000 cp, 4,200 sp, 1,780 gp, and 60 pp respectively. The small, scratched box contains three gems: a 100-gp garnet, a 375-gp spinel, and a 500-gp emerald. The oil painting depicts a mad wizard well known to citizens of the City of Greyhawk and could fetch as much as 600 gp. The silver oil lamp is worth 200 gp, but there is a *ring of feather fall* hidden inside it. The quiver is a *quiver of Ehlonna* with six *+1 arrows*. The ivory scrollcase is worth 50 gp and contains two scrolls (*cure serious wounds* and *remove disease*) cast at 6th-level.

T13. Vestibule. When the PCs reach the landing on the stairs, read or paraphrase the following boxed text. If they approach from the opposite direction, Endreya will not be present, and you should change the description accordingly.

At the bottom of the stairs, a lonely black brazier glowing with a purplish flame illuminates a small vestibule. Long black robes hang on either side of the small room. Across from the stairs is a set of doors, beyond which you can hear melodic chanting and the airy call of woodwind instruments..

A fair-haired woman with her back to you is donning one of the robes. Her head shifts in a curious manner as she begins to turn toward you.

A *continual flame* spell cast upon the brazier illuminates this vestibule. The robes are worn by the followers of Tharizdun while in the main temple. It is required that one be worn by anyone entering area **T16**. These robes are identical to those found in area **K13** except the obex symbol on the chest is replaced by a black spiral and the hood is made to cover the entire face, with holes cut for the wearer's eyes.

The woman is Endreya, a cultist.

Creature (EL 1/2): Endreya spilled wine on her robe and is donning a new one. PCs who achieve surprise can use their free partial action during the surprise round to step out of sight before Endreya has a chance to notice them (or they can take some other partial action). If Endreya is not surprised and sees one or more PCs, she uses her free partial action during the surprise round to open the double doors. If the heroes do not subdue her by her next action, she releases a blood-chilling scream and runs to area **T16**. If the PCs stay out of sight, Endreya puts on the robe and hurries back to area **T16**.

Endreya, Female Human Com1: CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 1d4; hp 3; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk -1 melee (1d4-1/crit 19-20, dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 8, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (weaving) +3, Handle Animal +2, Listen +4 (from Alertness feat), Ride +2, Spot +4 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +1. *Feats:* Alertness, Iron Will.

Possessions: Ceremonial robe, dagger, peasant's outfit.

Development: If Endreya alerts the cultists in area **T16**, two enforcers and four guards investigate. If this happens, the PCs lose the element of surprise and will have a much harder time dealing with the cult in the final encounter. Any enforcers and guards defeated here are subtracted from those in area **T16**.

T14. Acolyte Dormitory.

This room is plain, disorganized, and dreary. Ten cots line the walls. Each cot has a small trunk at its foot. The walls are painted flat black, and the floor is tiled with dull-gray stone.

Ten acolytes of Tharizdun stay here. These acolytes tend to the upkeep of the main temple and conduct the common rituals that Elgoth sees as beneath him. The acolytes surrender all that they own to the temple, so no treasure can be found here. Place common items in this room as you see fit.

T15. Barracks.

This room smells of sweat and is in complete disarray. Six unmade cots sit in a row against the far wall. Each has a small trunk at its foot. A communal sleeping area heaped with clothing, weapons, and personal items fills the left side of the room. A round table covered with tankards, tools, and three half-assembled suits of chainmail stands to the right.

The cots are reserved for Elgoth's bodyguards and temple enforcers, while the regular guards use the communal sleeping area. The trunks are locked, and the head bodyguard's trunk (on the far left) has **Treasure** inside, with a **Trap** to protect it. The other five trunks hold no treasure, but feel free to place personal items as needed. The communal sleeping area has nothing but common items.This kit of specialized pliers, hammers, and files are considered the perfect tools for repairing armor (affording a +2 circumstance bonus to related skill checks). The three suits of chainmail are damaged and in need of cleaning.

Trap (EL 2): One of Elgoth's bodyguards got his hands on a suit of *elven chainmail* (by killing its previous owner, naturally). He hid the armor in his trunk and paid Kris Maldrine (see area **K11**) to place a trap on it. The trap is rather simple: One end of a long string is attached to the inside of the trunk's lid and runs out a small hole in the back. The string stretches across the room (along the bottom of the wall) and attaches to the trigger of a heavy crossbow mounted on the ceiling in the far corner. When the trunk is opened, the string tightens and discharges a poisoned crossbow bolt.

Poisoned Bolt Trap: CR 2; +10 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20 plus poison); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Medium-size spider venom: Fortitude save (DC 14); initial 1d4 temporary Strength, secondary 1d6 temporary Strength.

Trunk Lock: Hardness 10; hp 20; Break (DC 25); Open Lock (DC 18).

Treasure: Inside the trunk is a suit of *elven chainmail*, an extra vial of Medium-size spider venom, a pouch containing 100 gp and 75 pp, and miscellaneous personal items.

The tools on the table are masterwork artisan's tools worth 55 gp.

T16. Main Temple. The description below assumes that the PCs enter the temple under the most favorable circumstances—undiscovered and wearing ceremonial robes from area T13. If circumstances change, modify the description accordingly.

Maniacal chanting, the unnerving moan of woodwind instruments, and the laborious screams of a woman echo through this temple. Eight fiery braziers stand in shallow alcoves, creating shadows that dance upon the cold gray walls like deranged marionettes. Armed guards stand near the walls and in the aisle, watching over pews filled with black-robed worshipers. The aisle ends before a stage, atop which sits an enormous altar of black stone and a monstrous tapestry depicting a dark, faceless form.

Atop the altar lies a red-haired woman suffering the pain of childbirth. A midwife disappears behind several cultists as she moves to attend the delivering mother. Behind the altar, an imposing figure wearing violet robes and a spiked helmet studies the delivery. A horribly decayed abomination floats behind the helmed figure.

The inhabitants of the temple are detailed under **Creatures** below. If the PCs enter the temple without drawing attention to themselves (by wearing ceremonial robes, for instance), they are ignored by the congregation.

Three rounds after the PCs reach the temple, Lyza Danwick (the screaming woman on the altar) gives birth to her son. If the PCs do not disrupt the ceremony, read the following:

The chanting rises to a fever pitch. For a moment there is silence, but this is soon broken by the cries of a newborn infant. The midwife swaddles the child in a warm black cloth and hands the infant to the violet-robed man behind the altar, who smiles at the child for a moment before holding it up before the congregation.

"Today, our destiny ends and a new destiny begins! The child—*my son*—will grow up and become our spiritual leader, awakening that which sleeps in darkness. Look now upon the newborn emissary of our Dark God, Tharizdun!"

The robed figure returns the child to the waiting arms of its mother before raising a misshapen onyx statuette over the infant's head.

The cultists are enthralled and do not notice the PCs unless they present an obvious threat. The enforcers and guards are more vigilant, noticing PCs who don't take measures to disguise themselves and hide their equipment. Even then, if a PC does something suspicious or menacing (such as approach the altar), the guards intercede. A PC can allay a guard's suspicions with a successful Bluff check opposed by the guard's Sense Motive check. If the guard wins, that PC is discovered. If the PC wins, the guard dismisses his suspicions and returns to his station.

The Binding Ritual lasts only 1 minute (10 rounds) and consists of Lyza holding the child while Elgoth touches the infant with the onyx statuette. After 1 minute of continuous contact, the statue transforms into a formless black ichor that seeps through the child's pores and "becomes one" with the infant. If the PCs do not interrupt the ceremony, the child's alignment is magically altered to chaotic evil, and he is forever bound as a servant to Tharizdun (see "Concluding the Adventure").

The braziers have no magical properties, but the coals deal 1d6 points of fire damage if thrown at someone.

Lifting the end of a pew or knocking it over requires a successful Strength check (DC 20). Running along the back of a pew or jumping from one pew to another requires a successful Balance check (DC 20). PCs cannot take 20 on this roll, and falling off of a pew deals 1d4 points of subdual damage.

Creatures (EL 11): This is a very dangerous encounter. The heroes are woefully outnumbered, but they should have surprise on their side (unless a previous encounter went horribly wrong). The EL above assumes that the PCs have surprise and that the destruction of the temple (see below) will decrease the number of cultists and a few of the guards.

The key players in this grisly scene are Elgoth, the kurge (Elgoth's undead guardian), Lyza, the enforcers and guards, the cultists, and the newborn emissary of Tharizdun. The entire temple is under the effects of an *unhallow* spell, so all turning checks suffer a -4 profane penalty. The followers of Tharizdun are treated as if protected by a *magic circle against good.*

Elgoth, Male Human Clr6/Doomdreamer1 (Tharizdun): CR 7; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 7d8+7; hp 47; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+5 chainmail armor); Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, *+1 heavy mace*); SA spells; SQ command undead, spells, insanity, deeper madness; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +5 (includes Iron Will feat and Insanity); Str 12, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 18, Insanity 5.

Skills: Concentration +11, Diplomacy +8, Heal +2, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (Suloise history) +9, Spellcraft +12. *Feats:* Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Still Spell. *Languages:* Common, Infernal, Suloise.

SQ—Insanity (Ex): Clerics of Tharizdun use Wisdom + Insanity in place of Wisdom when determining bonus spells and

DOOMDREAMER PRESTIGE CLASS

Doomdreamers are the elite among the ranks of the cult of Tharizdun. The name comes from their claim to have been contacted by the Dark God in their dreams.

This new prestige class is fully described in *Return To the Temple of Elemental Evil* by Monte Cook.

Insanity Score

Regardless of whether they select the Madness domain, all clerics of Tharizdun share one common aspect: They are insane. To reach beyond the veil and draw upon the power of Tharizdun is to touch madness itself, and no one can do so and come back unchanged.

As a special rule, every cleric of Tharizdun gains an Insanity score equal to half his cleric level, rounded down (count any doomdreamer levels as cleric levels for the purpose of calculating this score). For spellcasting (determining bonus spells and DCs), add this score to the cleric's Wisdom score and use the result in place of Wisdom alone. For all other purposes, such as skill checks and saving throws, subtract this score from the cleric's Wisdom score and use the result in place of Wisdom alone. This means that the spells of the servants of the Dark God are very difficult to resist, but those servants are in general unaware of their surroundings and act imprudently—often erratically.

spell DCs. They use Wisdom - Insanity for all other purposes (such as Listen checks or Will saving throws).

SQ–Doomdreamer Secret (Ex): Elgoth's deeper madness affords a +2 bonus to his Insanity score, increasing it to 5.

Spells (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1, base DC = 18 + spell level): 0–*cure minor wounds, guidance, read magic, resistance* (×3); 1st–*command, entropic shield, doom, protection from good, random action†, sanctuary;* 2nd–*cure moderate wounds, darkness, death knell, hold person, Tharizdun's touch†* (see "New Spell" sidebar on page 70 for details); 3rd–*cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic circle against law†, magic vestment;* 4th–*chaos hammer†, divine power, poison.*

†Domain spells. *Domains:* Chaos (cast chaos spells at +1 caster level), Madness (clarity of true madness 1/day; Elgoth can use his Insanity score as a bonus on a single roll involving Wisdom, such as a Listen check or a Will saving throw, but the choice to use this power must be made before the die roll).

Possessions: Chainmail, ceremonial robe, spiked helmet, *+1 heavy mace,* five scrolls (*augury, bane, cure serious wounds, endurance,* and *negative energy protection*) cast at 6th level, iron ring of keys (for the door in area **T11** and the desk drawers in area **T12**), onyx statuette (worth 100 gp intact).

Description: Elgoth has cropped red hair and a neatly trimmed beard and mustache. His thick eyebrows hover menacingly over his violet eyes. He is charismatic and handsome, but his wild eyes betray his madness. He considers himself an academic genius and flies into a murderous rage when proven wrong or questioned. His delusions of grandeur are fueled by the Dark God's constant promises of power and domination. Elgoth stops at nothing to ensure the safety of his son, the "emissary." He feels nothing for Lyza.

Kurge (1): hp 44; consult the "New Creature" description at the end of the adventure.

Lyza Danwick, Female Human Ari1: CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 15 ft. (pregnant); AC 8 (-2 Dex); Atk -1 melee (1d4-1/crit 19-20, dagger); AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref -2, Will +4 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 8, Dex 13 (currently 7), Con 12, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +10 (includes Skill Focus feat), Diplomacy +8, Listen +5, Sense Motive +5. *Feats:* Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff). *Languages:* Abyssal, Common, Elvish, Suloise.

Possessions: Ceremonial robe, dagger.

Description: Lyza is a liar, spoiled brat, and sociopath. She has never worked an honest day in her life and feels that physical labor is beneath her–especially since she has been chosen by Tharizdun to deliver his emissary. She has a volatile temper but prefers calculated revenge to physical violence. Elgoth uses her onyx statuette to focus the power of the Dark God, but Lyza seldom lets it out of her sight.

Enforcers, Male Human War2 (4): CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 2d8+4; hp 16 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail, +2 large shield); Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/crit 19-20, longsword); or +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL CE; SV Fort +7 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb -2*, Jump -2*, Listen +3 (includes Alertness feat), Spot +3 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Great Fortitude. *Language:* Common. *Includes the -7 armor check penalty for chainmail and large shield.

Possessions: Chainmail armor, large steel shield, longsword, light crossbow, ceremonial robe.

Guards, Male/Female Human War1 (8): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d8+4 (includes Toughness feat); hp 9 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+5 chainmail, +2 large shield); Atk +2 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, longsword); or +1 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb -5*, Jump -5*, Listen +3 (includes Alertness feat), Spot +3 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Toughness. *Language:* Common. *Includes the -7 armor check penalty for chainmail and large shield.

Possessions: Chainmail armor, large steel shield, longsword, light crossbow, ceremonial robes.

Cultists, Male/Female Human Com1 (30, 10 are combative): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d4; hp 2 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); AL CE; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (various) +6 (includes Skill Focus feat), Profession (various) +6 (includes Skill Focus feat), Ride +2, Swim +2. *Feats:* Skill Focus (Craft), Skill Focus (Profession).

Possessions: Ceremonial robes, dagger, peasant's outfit.

Tactics: As soon as the PCs are discovered or make themselves known, chaos ensues.

Elgoth resolves to finish the binding ceremony, relying on his kurge bodyguard to hold off attackers. If struck while chanting, he must make a successful Concentration check (DC 10 + damage dealt), or the ceremony is disrupted. If this happens, Elgoth flies into a mad rage, smashing the onyx statuette upon the altar. Doing so not only derails his carefully set plans but also triggers a **Trap** that threatens to destroy the temple and everyone inside.

Lyza can barely move after just giving birth. If the PCs has not deduced that she is part of the cult, she tries manipulating them into helping her to safety, rescuing her baby, and killing Elgoth. She wants to become the leader of the cult, using her role as the emissary's mother to win the cultists' loyalty.

The enforcers and guards fight to the death to protect the cult. They do not think twice about cutting through the crowd of cultists to protect the emissary and Elgoth.

Although the cultists are fanatics, only ten of them attack the PCs. The remaining cultists cower or run for safety, fighting only as a last resort.

Trap (EL 4): Smashing the onyx statuette before the ritual is completed releases a surge of energy that consumes (and eventually destroys) the temple. When the statuette shatters, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

> The onyx statue shatters, causing a wave of black energy to roar through the temple, shaking the stone to its foundations. Suddenly, huge chunks of the ceiling rain down upon the congregation. The cultists scream as the jagged shards shear flesh and shatter bone.

Everyone in the room must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) or take 2d6 points of damage from falling debris. You can assume that at least half of the cultists and guards are smashed by falling debris or trampled to death by other members of the fleeing congregation. Lyza uses her own body to protect the newborn child and suffers a -4 penalty to her save as a consequence.

The PCs have 2 rounds to rescue Lyza or her child before the room collapses, dealing 20d6 points of damage to everyone within. Meanwhile, the rest of the temple complex begins to shudder. At this point, the PCs (and any other creatures still inside the complex) have 10 rounds to flee the complex before it completely caves in. With the temple destroyed and the gateway in area **T1** obliterated, trapped PCs are crushed to death (unless they have an unforeseen means of escape up their sleeves).

Make the escape from the temple complex as dramatic as possible, with the PCs rescuing the child and diving through the exit in area **T1** seconds before the temple crashes down behind them. If Elgoth is still alive, he tries to delay the PCs for as long as possible, determined to trap them in the doomed complex. Elgoth does not leave the temple voluntarily, embracing the long sleep that is death.

Collapsing Temple: CR 5; 2d6 points of damage from falling debris—Reflex save (DC 15) negates—plus 20d6 points of damage from the temple's complete collapse (no save for creatures still trapped inside).

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs are fooled by Lyza's innocent act and rescue her with the child, she seeks retribution for what they have done to the cult and Tharizdun. The Danwick home is already in shambles, but Lyza will reduce it to ashes, setting it ablaze after taking whatever she can carry and leaving with her son. She knows there are potential followers of Tharizdun in Dyvers, so she goes there to start a new cult with her son as the centerpiece. Her eventual success depends on whether the binding ceremony was prevented, but either way Lyza will be a thorn in the PCs' sides.

Lyza refuses to bestow a name upon her son, referring to him secretly as The Dark One or Nameless One. If the ritual to bind the child to Tharizdun is not stopped, the future of your campaign could be dramatically affected. The boy grows with Tharizdun ever present in his dreams. On his thirteenth birthday, he begins a quest to release the Dark God from his prison. By this time, the Nameless One will have developed the abilities of a 1st-level cleric and an almost fiendish charisma and cunning. He is driven by the malevolent voice within him and will stop at nothing to accomplish his goal. If the PCs rescued Lyza, she has gathered a cult of fanatic worshipers who revere her son as much as they do the Dark God.

If the ceremony to bind the child to Tharizdun is stopped, the Nameless One might grow to become an unequaled force for good in the Flanaess. The charismatic and strong-willed boy becomes a paladin or cleric of a good-aligned deity, opposing Tharizdun and other evil forces with divinely inspired fanaticism. If she survives, Lyza tries desperately to sway her son to the darkness of Tharizdun, but his morality is unyielding. He might even abandon his mother and her new cult to warn the PCs of an upcoming act of revenge against them. Ω

Robert is a graphic designer and art instructor from Nashville, Tennessee. He has played D&D for over 18 years and was one of the many 3E playtesters. He thanks his wife and two children for inspiring the adventure and his parents for sparking his interest in mythology at an early age.

by Monte Cook

New Spell

Tharizdun's Touch
Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Madness 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You may daze one living creature by making a successful touch attack. If the target creature does not make a successful Will save, its mind is clouded and it takes no action for 1 round per caster level. The dazed creature is not stunned (so attackers get no special advantage against it), but can't move, cast spells, use mental abilities, and so on.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL CHART

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (EL) for all of the encounters in "The Cradle of Madness."

RANSOM SITE

Area	Encounter Description	EL
–	Yemar Thallow, Male Human War3	7
	Trillanian Murdow, Male Human Wiz3	
	Enforcers, Male Human War2 (4)	

RUINED KEEP

Area	Encounter Description	EL
K1	*Greater Glyph of Warding* (Fear) Trap	4
K2	Alarm Wires Trap	1/2
K3	Crumbling Tower Trap	4
	Glyph of Warding (Lightning) Trap	3
K4	Debilitating Stomach Disorder	3
K5	Hawks (2)	2/3
K9	Light Horses (5)	–
K10	Medium-size Monstrous Spiders (8)	6
K11	Kris Maldrine, Male Human Rog3	8
	Ursh Bloodknuckle, Male Half-orc Clr3	
	Enforcers, Male Human War2 (2)	
	Guards, Male/Female Human War1 (4)	
K12	Spring-loaded Pendulum Trap	3
	Cold Zone Trap	3
	Greater Glyph of Warding (Fear) Trap	4
K13	Disintegrating Arch Trap	7

TEMPLE OF THARIZDUN

Area	Encounter Description	EL
T1	Black Tentacles Trap	6
T3	Muklang, Male Ogre Ftr4	5
T5	Falling Crates Trap	1
T6	Guard Dogs (6)	2
T7	Kurge (1)	6
	Umbrax Vapor Trap	4
T8	Artillis Segrentine, Human Ghost Clr4	6
T9	Bregnam, Male Human War6	5
T10	Swinging Chain/Pit of Burning Coals	5
T11	Wraith (1)	5
T12	Negative Energy Globe Trap	3
T13	Endreya, Female Human Com1	1/2
T15	Poisoned Bolt Trap	2
T16	Elgoth, Male Human Clr6/Ddr1	11
	Kurge (1)	
	Lyza, Female Human Ari1	
	Enforcers, Male/Female Human War2 (4)	
	Guards, Male/Female Human War1 (8)	
	Cultists, Male/Female Human Com1 (10)	
	Collapsing Temple Trap	5

KURGE

Medium-size Undead

Hit Dice:	6d12 (39 hp)
Initiative:	+4 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.
AC:	17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +7 melee; or 6 slams +5 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d6+3; slam 1d4
Special Attacks:	Constitution damage, disease, anatomic separation
Special Qualities:	Particle cloud, feather fall, fast healing 1, undead immunities
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 18, Con –, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14
Skills:	Climb +9, Escape Artist +4*, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Search +6
Feats:	Combat Reflexes, Multiattack
Climate/Terrain:	Any
Organization:	Solitary or gang (2-5)
Challenge Rating:	6
Treasure:	Half standard goods or items
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	7-12 HD (Medium-size)

A kurge is a disgusting undead creature that appears as an animated humanoid in an advanced state of decay. Various body parts and limbs are often hanging together only by a few rancid strips of flesh. The unholy symbol of Tharizdun is burned into its forehead, torso, and both arms and legs. Faint white flame that radiates intense cold washes over the thing's body, but perhaps the strangest aspect of a kurge is the fact that it floats about a foot off the ground when moving.

Kurges were created by the Cult of Tharizdun as temple guardians. While their creator lives (either alive or undead) the kurges are bound to strictly and literally follow orders. Once their creator dies, however, the kurges become uncontrolled. Such kurges actively search for living mortals to destroy out of hatred for life.

Although all but forgotten, the process by which a kurge is created is relatively simple and can be undertaken by any wizard with access to the school of Necromancy—once the appropriate spells are known and available to be cast. The wizard must first slay a living person (human or nonhuman) by injecting the victim with a rare and lethal poison known as haramere. Haramere is difficult to find and brew, and often costs in excess of 1,500 gp per dose. It is an injected DC 18 poison that does 2d6 initial Constitution damage and 2d6 secondary Constitution damage. Those slain by haramere begin to putrefy very rapidly, and within 6 hours are nothing but a skeleton in a pool of liquefied filth. This decay can be stalled by soaking the body in brine; this must be done for an entire night if a wizard wishes to create a kurge from the remains. Once these requirements are met, the wizard must cast the following spells on the body while it is still submerged in brine: *animate dead, levitate, geas, telekinesis, vampiric touch,* and *gentle repose*. With the last spell, the body rises from the brine as a kurge, ready to obey its creator's every whim.

Combat

Kurges generally lie motionless on the ground, waiting for victims to come near. When someone does, they spring up and attack, surprising the victim. A successful Spot check versus a kurge's Hide check defeats such an ambush. Kurges attack with two claws until they are struck for damage. (See below.)

Constitution Damage (Su): Kurges seethe with an unholy cold fire that damages the lifeforce of those they touch. Anyone struck by a kurge must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or take 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage.

Disease (Ex): Kurges are filthy creatures that swarm with parasites and filth. Anyone who is damaged by a kurge in melee combat must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or catch a particularly virulent disease known as skinripple from the creature. If the Fortitude save is not successful, the damaged creature takes 1d4 points of permanent Constitution damage after an incubation time of 1d4 days. Once per day afterward, the infected creature must make a successful Fortitude saving throw to avoid repeated damage. Two successful saves in a row indicate that the creature has fought off the infection.

Initial symptoms include numbness, chills, dizziness, and shortness of breath. As the disease progresses, large watery blisters form on the victim's body and the skin becomes loose and baggy.

Anatomic Separation (Su): Whenever a kurge is struck for damage, the monster's body splits apart into six components: a head, two arms, two legs, and the torso. Each body part remains animated and can continue to attack by slamming into targets with great force. These attacks cause temporary Constitution damage. A kurge's face (5 ft. by 5 ft.) and reach (5 ft.) remain the same once it anatomically separates; the body parts must remain fairly close together. Each body part can attack different targets in melee range, or they can all concentrate on a single target. The body parts continue to fight until the kurge's hit points are reduced to 0, at which time the body parts drop to the ground and rapidly rot away. Magical forces prevent the body parts from being disassociated and taken from the square the kurge occupies. Grapple attempts against separated kurge parts are treated as though made against a Huge creature.

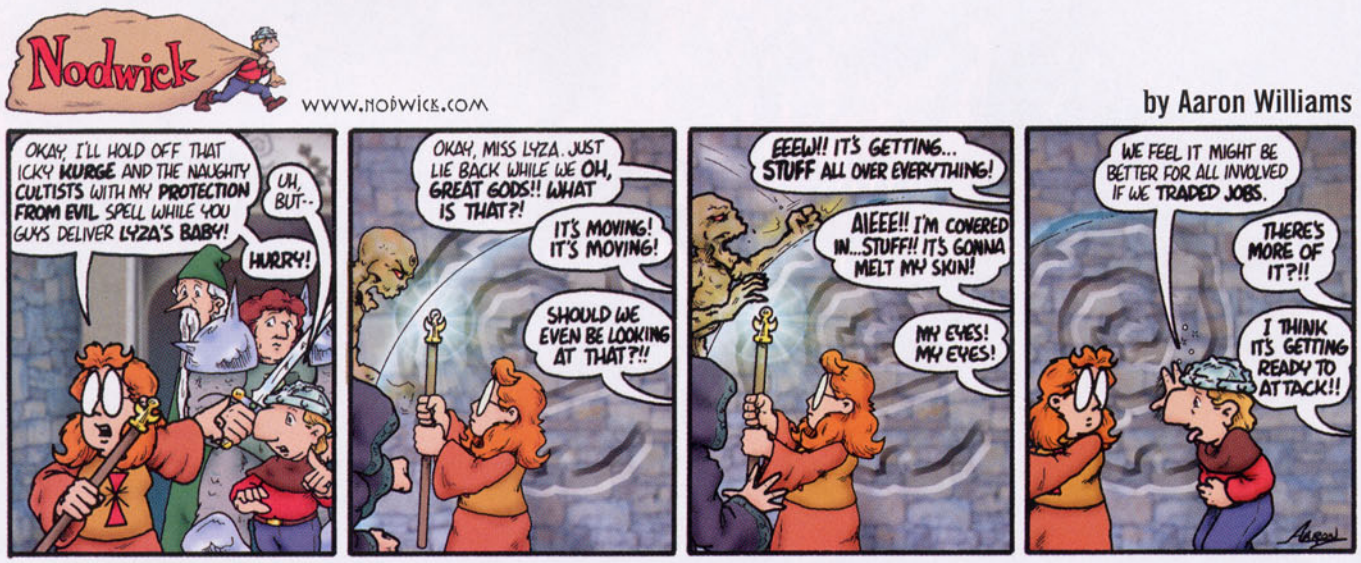
Particle Cloud (Su): When a kurge's anatomic separation power activates, hundreds of tiny bits of bone and leathery flesh explode off of the kurge's body, surrounding each body part with a stinging swarm of whirling decay. Anyone in melee combat with a separated kurge automatically takes 1d3 points of damage per round from this cloud.

***Feather Fall* (Sp):** Although their means of locomotion might resemble flight, it is actually a form of levitation that allows horizontal motion. A kurge always remains no more than a foot off the ground. A falling kurge is protected by a continual *feather fall* effect.

Fast Healing (Ex): A kurge heals damage at the rate of 1 hit point per round. If this returns the kurge to full hit points, its body parts instantly re-attach. This healing ceases once the kurge is brought to 0 hit points.

Undead: The kurge is immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Skills: A kurge gains a +10 bonus to Escape Artist checks when its anatomic separation power is active.


Nodwick
WWW.NODWICK.COM
by Aaron Williams
OKAY, I'LL HOLD OFF THAT ICKY KURGE AND THE NAUGHTY CULTISTS WITH MY PROTECTION FROM EVIL SPELL WHILE YOU GUYS DELIVER LYZA'S BABY!
UH, BUT--
HURRY!
OKAY, MISS LYZA. JUST LIE BACK WHILE WE OH, GREAT GODS!! WHAT IS THAT?!
IT'S MOVING! IT'S MOVING!
SHOULD WE EVEN BE LOOKING AT THAT?!!
EEEW! IT'S GETTING... STUFF ALL OVER EVERYTHING!
AIEEE!! I'M COVERED IN...STUFF!! IT'S GONNA MELT MY SKIN!
MY EYES! MY EYES!
WE FEEL IT MIGHT BE BETTER FOR ALL INVOLVED IF WE TRADED JOBS.
THERE'S MORE OF IT?!!
I THINK IT'S GETTING READY TO ATTACK!!

Glacier Season

Kingdom of the White Wyrm

by David Eckelberry

artwork by Carl Critchlow • cartography by Christopher West

"Glacier Season" is a D&D adventure for four to six 15th-level characters capable of taking on a formidable dragon at the height of its abilities. Along the way, the characters must encounter and defeat a small host of foul creatures that serve the beast and do their best to acquire a few allies of their own. During the adventure, the heroes should also acquire enough experience points (XP) to reach 16th level before it concludes (with great success, perhaps even 17th level at the finale). While the adventure is set to begin at 15th level, the story behind it is open to more characters. With some easy modifications (see the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar), this adventure can be played by any party of characters at or above 10th level. You will need the Player's Handbook, Dungeon Master's Guide, *and the* Monster Manual *to properly run this adventure.*

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

The white dragon Acessiwal is an ancient villain, well versed in the ways of evil and a growing bane to humankind. For more than a millennia, he has grown in power and today represents one of the oldest of the dragonkind in the world. With wealth and power to rival kingdoms, the dragon threatens to one day consume thousands of lives. Cunning and ferocious, the self-titled Ice King has already been the end of hundreds of would-be dragonslayers.

For centuries, Acessiwal was content to terrorize the tundra beyond the realms of humanity. Seldom has he turned his eye toward raid or conquest, but things have changed in recent decades. Thirty years ago, Acessiwal dealt a final defeat to the frost giant clans that had checked his rulership over the cold wastes. Then he began to look beyond his longtime plains of ice for new lands to bring under his icy dominion, and that led the dragon south to civilized lands.

Acessiwal was intrigued by humanity; for the past several hundred years, most of the dragon's contacts with humankind came by way of failed dragonslayers. In humanoid form, Acessiwal descended into Latona, the closest settlement of any size. For weeks, the dragon observed humans, elves, dwarves, and other people as they went about their little lives. Eventually, though, the novelty of living among humanoids paled, and the dragon realized the only true way he could relate to humanity was as master to slave. Acessiwal returned to his icy lair and began to plan.

Coldheart was once little more than a small network of caves where Acessiwal could rest, bask in his hoard, and consume a hearty meal. In the past twenty years, the dragon has expanded Coldheart to make room for the servants he has rallied to his banner. Now Coldheart is a sprawling dungeon home to creatures foul and cold, all of them loyal to Acessiwal. Unknown to anyone, Acessiwal is building the force to win an empire. Fortunately for the heroes, the dragon has a few weaknesses in his fortress, including its own ambitious and untrustworthy minions.

Adventure Synopsis

PCs learn of a scaly villain threatening the town and villages south of Latona. The adventure, which pits the heroes against Acessiwal and his minions, is divided into three parts:

Part I: Black Sheep. The PCs encounter Taigiel, the half-dragon son of Acessiwal, and learn of both Acessiwal's threat to humankind and Taigiel's quest to end the life of his father.

Part II: Across the Winterlands. The PCs hurry north with Taigiel to the city of Latona, the last bastion of civilization in the winterlands. A series of harrowing encounters with the creatures of the tundra offers danger, reward, and the chance to secure allies. Eventually the PCs discover the trick to breaking into Coldheart, the dragon's glacial stronghold.

Part III: Coldheart. The PCs breach the dragon's stronghold and must overcome Acessiwal's formidable servants, including a human wizard sworn to serve evil, a demon, ice golems, and

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Although this adventure is written for four 15th-level characters, it can also be played with fewer 16th- to 20th-level PCs or larger groups of characters as low as 10th level.

Adjusting the statistics of high-level creatures and NPCs can be tricky and tedious. Adapting the adventure for higher- and lower-level groups is best done in several ways:

• Altering the number of foes in an encounter. For instance, instead of encountering two ice golems (EL 15), the PCs might face one golem (EL 13) or six golems (EL 18). See Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for advice on balancing ELs for parties of varying size and level.

• Adding or removing some special tactical advantage possessed by the foes. For instance, Samakel (see area 55) is an easy encounter for 20th-level PCs, but not if the half-dragon has a *sequester* spell cast on him, wears a *ring of evasion*, or commands 1d4 *simulacra* of himself.

• Combining separate encounters into a single encounter, or dividing a challenging encounter into two or more separate encounters of lower EL. For instance, a party of four 10th-level PCs will be hard-pressed to defeat Wejel and Jorman together (see area 54), so you might consider splitting these NPCs and having the PCs encounter them separately.

• Providing or eliminating opportunities for the PCs to rest and recuperate. If the PCs have time to heal and replenish their resources, they will have an easier time surviving the module's encounters. If they are constantly besieged by enemies, they will be weakened sufficiently to make future encounters more of a challenge. For higher-level parties, consider placing some special wards on the dragon's lair that prevent escape via *teleport* or *plane shift* spells. For lower-level parties, make the dragon's forces less vigilant and organized so that the PCs can "hole up" in Coldheart without being attacked at every turn.

• Provide or take away a powerful ally. For instance, Taigiel the half-dragon (see area 2) can give a weaker party some extra muscle, or he could betray or abandon higher-level PCs at a critical moment during the adventure. Similarly, the frost giants might hit upon the idea of laying siege to Coldheart, drawing away Acessiwal's forces long enough for the PCs to reach the dragon more easily.

The encounter with Acessiwal is designed to be challenging and potentially disastrous for the PCs. To make the encounter with Acessiwal easier, consider removing his ability to scry on the PCs (and thus increasing their chance of catching the dragon by surprise), taking away one or both of the dragon's magic items (*ring of fire resistance, +6 circlet of Charisma*), or allowing the PCs to form an alliance with Helios the wizard. To make the encounter with Acessiwal more challenging, you could give the dragon more demonic allies or offspring (a trio of young adult white dragons, for instance), allow the dragon to marshall forces more quickly, or make Acessiwal a draco-lich (using the lich template described on pages 216-217 of the *Monster Manual*).

When adjusting the adventure, bear in mind that high-level PCs have access to magic that enables them to move quickly and unseen, summon powerful allies, *raise* or *resurrect* dead comrades, and block a foe's scrying attempts. They might also have cohorts (see the Leadership feat description on page 45 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), animal companions, familiars, and *charmed* monsters. Consider these things when deciding whether an encounter is too difficult for the party.

more. The longer they can preserve stealth, the easier it will be for them. Ultimately, though, they must dare the ire of the white wyrm in its lair.

The events of this adventure are assumed to take place just after harvest, with the approach of winter. The cooling climate provides an impetus for the PCs to hurry. The tundra over which they must travel is cut off from the rest of the world by icy mountains. The few passes that afford access are sealed by winter snows, and should the PCs tarry overlong, they might never reach their objective, much less return.

Character Hooks

Feel free to change the names of the settlements mentioned herein or redraw the wilderness map to fit the particulars of your campaign. As the story opens, the PCs are on the north trade road a few miles south of Finch, an unspectacular hamlet. The PCs might be drawn to Finch for a number of reasons:

Investigation: Recently, one or more of the PCs have heard tales of a winged demon that descends upon the villages and hamlets of the land, driving all of the inhabitants into hiding. The raids are never explained, as the people return an hour later to find that little, or indeed nothing, has been stolen. What is this demon looking for?

Expedition to Finch: An old legend holds that Finch was the birthplace—and the resting place—of a great hero from a past age. The humble town might still house relics of the bygone time and offer opportunities for the heroes of the present to find a link to the past.

Trailing Foes: The PCs are pursuing enemies from their last adventure. Their foes might seek refuge in the unpopulated northlands or might be searching for a new lord in the form of the dragon Acessiwal.

Lost: Even the greatest heroes lose their way at times, and all that's necessary for this adventure is to get the PCs close to Finch and then to let events unfold.

PART 1: BLACK SHEEP

Blow, blow, thou winter wind:
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

—William Shakespeare

Icy air blows across the grasslands, announcing winter's coming. The PCs travel the North Road, which extends from populated lands in the south to Latona, the northernmost outpost of humanity in the region. Along the way, it passes through several small settlements, including the hamlet of Finch.

The snow and wind slow overland travel. Multiply normal overland movement rates by three-quarters. Without a forced march or magical assistance, the average wagon travels only 12 miles per day, and the fastest horse 36 miles per day. Refer to the Overland Movement rules in the *Player's Handbook*.

Keyed Encounters (Areas 1–3)

The following encounters are event-based, beginning as the PCs approach the hamlet of Finch.

1. Exodus. In this encounter, the PCs are drawn into the quest as they answer a call for help.

> The only things that divide the fields of white snow on your left and right are the tracks of wagons, horses, and boots that have passed this way before. Falling snow, stinging your face with the bite of frost, needlessly reminds you of the lateness of the season. The good news is, according to the wagoneer you passed yesterday, tonight you will sleep by a fireplace with warmed mead to comfort you.
>
> A small village has just crept into view when you see a group of humans, led by a gnome, approaching. They appear to be simple villagers, though a few of them—including the gnome—are armed. They look to be in something of a hurry. The gnome woman hails you. "Turn back! A demon has taken Finch!" she shouts.

The gnome is Cirilli Treetrapweaver (female gnome War3), Finch's deputy. She and the band of refugees she leads head directly for the PCs. As she stops to talk to the PCs, the other villagers continue their flight. Read or paraphrase the following:

> "I'm Cirilli. Cirilli Treetrapweaver. I'm the constable's deputy. In Finch. Finch? It's the village there. My home.
>
> "You have to turn around! Finch isn't safe. An hour ago, a great white demon flew down from the sky! It landed right outside Saul's store, next to the old shrine! We all ran before it could kill us . . ."

Cirilli is normally a steady hand of law enforcement and peacekeeping in Finch, but she's a bit overwrought at the sight of a demon in her home. Once the PCs calm her down, she can offer the following information:

- Constable Heimyr (Cirilli's boss) and Cirilli handle things like drunken trappers and hunters, not demons.
- The demon looked like a massively muscled man covered in white scales. It had great leathery wings and icy breath that spewed forth from its mouth as it roared.
- Cirilli has heard rumors of this demon before. According to some of the rumors, villagers returned to their town after a few hours to find nothing missing and the demon gone.
- Cirilli and the refugees are fleeing to another settlement two days to the southeast. Cirilli thinks that the constable and the mayor led another group of villagers north, toward Latona.

Cirilli will not accompany the PCs, and neither will any of the frightened villagers. At best, the PCs can convince her to halt the trek south to allow them an hour or so to deal with the demon. If the PCs investigate Finch, move to the next encounter.

2. Dragonspawn.

> Smoky plumes rise from the chimneys of Finch, but nothing stirs among the stone houses or humble dwellings of wood and thatch. The village looks abandoned, and there is no sign of the threat that drove the people away.

The North Road cuts through Finch's core, which is composed of thirteen modest buildings including a smithy, a small temple to Fharlanghn, an inn, and a small store. The rest of the buildings are private residences, including the mayor's home. All of the buildings are devoid of inhabitants save for one.

The "demon" that the Cirilli spoke of is inside the local store, busily shopping. PCs exploring the hamlet can make a Listen check (DC 10) to hear noises from inside Tratern's Goodstuffs, a square building 30 feet to a side. When the PCs gaze within, read the following text:

> The store is cluttered and cramped. Boxes lie stacked about the walls, and carpets, coats, and furs litter the floor without any apparent organization.
>
> Standing near one wall is a 6-foot-tall humanoid creature wearing a suit of plate armor that's either painted white or polished to such a degree so as to create the effect. Indeed, it's difficult to distinguish at a glance where the armor ends and the creature's scaly white epidermis begins. A thin red cloak adds the only color to its appearance. At a distance, the creature might pass for a pale human. Up close, the sharpened claws, reptilian eyes, and long teeth mark it as something else.
>
> The creature is busily looking over the shelves along the far wall. A small collection of things—mostly foodstuffs—has been stacked on the floor next to the creature.

The "demon" is, in fact, a half-dragon named Taigiel. If the PCs remain hidden or scry on the creature from outside, the half-dragon meticulously picks through the store's supplies over the next hour, placing the things he wants in a leather sack. He then removes 25 gp from his pouch and leaves the coins on the shelf. If the PCs continue to make themselves scarce, Taigiel eventually flies out of town, heading south.

Unless the PCs remain silent and hidden, the half-dragon turns to address anyone who enters the store. Read the following text whenever the PCs make themselves known:

> Turning to face you, the creature speaks in unaccented Common. "My name is Taigiel," it says. "Don't be afraid, villager. I won't hurt you."

Creature (EL 17): Taigiel explains that he is a half-dragon. He doesn't intend harm to the villagers and regrets the effect his sudden arrival has had on the hamlet.

Hamlet of Finch

This small settlement is where the PCs encounter Taigiel. The hamlet follows the rules noted for a settlement of its size in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 137.

Finch (Hamlet): Conventional; AL N; 100-gp limit; Assets 515 gp; Population 103; Mixed (human 79, halfling 9, elf 5, dwarf 3, gnome 2, half-elf 1, half orc 1).

Authority Figures: Mayor Trevor Jisk, male human Com5.

Important Characters: Heimyr Olivart, male dwarf War5 (constable); Cirilli Treetrapweaver, female gnome War3 (deputy); Jomas Lodorin, male half-elf Clr2 (Fharlanghn/healer); Ajata Oitoer, female human Exp3 (blacksmith); Saul Tratern, male elf Exp4 (merchant); Werner Kline, male halfling Exp1 (Warm Resthold barkeep).

Taigiel isn't expecting to confront adventurers. Once it becomes clear who he's dealing with, Taigiel makes no move to unsheath his weapon or otherwise alarm the PCs. Once introductions are complete and a conversation has begun, Taigiel tells the PCs something about himself:

- "I am the son of Acessiwal, the infamous white dragon of the tundra. I traveled far from these cold lands to escape my terrible birth and the curse my father bequeathed to me. Now, I've returned to fulfill my destiny."
- "Wherever I go, I am feared and reviled as a demon, devil, or monster. No village, town, or city that I have known will accept me."
- "I have trained and readied myself, searching for a band of heroes to help me slay my father. By ending the dragon's terrible reign, I pray that the gods will grant me peace. Perhaps then, people will not see me as a monster."
- "I beg for your help. I want nothing in return—no glory, riches, or fame. I just hope that once Acessiwal is dead, the gods shall grant me peace and rest."

Taigiel speaks truthfully. Years ago, Acessiwal took human form and visited the town of Latona, siring children with several human women. While his mother did her best to conceal Taigiel's nature from the people of Latona, it was not enough, and Taigiel was forced to flee at the age of ten. Keeping to the wilderness, he learned the ways of a ranger, fighting a private war against orcs, ogres, and other evil creatures. Three months ago, wracked with despair and loneliness, he visited a shrine of Heironeous in disrepair. There, he heard a voice. The voice, which must have belonged to the god himself, pronounced that only with the death of his sire could Taigiel be free. Thus, he has returned to the winterlands to fulfill his destiny.

Taigiel likes to hear of the great adventures the PCs have had. He's desperate for their assistance, should they prove able and willing to take arms against Acessiwal.

Taigiel knows the approximate location of Acessiwal's lair. A few weeks ago, he was met by a pair of his father's servants outside Latona and told how to reach Coldheart, the dragon's secret lair, so that he might return to his father's side and help enslave the lands to the south. He refused the offer to serve his father and fled.

Taigiel, Male Half-dragon (White)/Half-human Rgr15: CR 17; Medium-Size Humanoid (Half-dragon/Half-human) (6 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 15d12+15; hp 141; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 26 (+4 natural, +3 Dex, +9 *+4 mithral breastplate*); Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (1d8+9/crit 19-20, *+2 longsword*), +15/+10 melee (1d6+6/crit 19-20, *+3 short sword*); or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d6+10/crit ×3, *+3 mighty composite longbow* and *+3 arrows*); SA Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting, favored enemies (1st—goblinoid, 2nd—undead, 3rd—dragon, 4th—giant), breath weapon; SQ dragon subtype, cold immunity, immunities, low-light vision, 60-ft. darkvision; AL NE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 24, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +11, Concentration +9, Heal +10, Intuit Direction +15, Jump +10, Knowledge (nature) +13, Listen +17, Move Silently +16, Search +8, Spot +14, Swim +10, Wilderness Lore +17. *Feats:* Dodge, Expertise, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold (30 feet) 1/day; 3d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 16) for half damage.

SQ—Immunities: Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

Spells Prepared (3/2/1/1, base DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*detect animals or plants, entangle, resist elements, speak with animals;* 2nd—*cure light wounds, hold animal;* 3rd—*tree shape;* 4th—*summon nature's ally IV.*

Possessions: +4 mithral breastplate, +3 mighty composite longbow [+4], 40 *+3 arrows, +2 longsword, +3 short sword, boots of flying, +3 cloak of resistance.*

Tactics: Should the PCs use the advantage of surprise to attack Taigiel or later decide to attack, he immediately asks for a parley, shouting out "Wait! I mean you no harm!" Taigiel defends himself as best he can. Once it becomes clear that he's outnumbered and overpowered, he flees.

Development: If the PCs slay or drive off Taigiel before he has a chance to warn them about Acessiwal, consider planting additional rumors in Finch of a powerful white dragon scheming in the northlands or introduce another NPC who can point the PCs in the right direction.

PLAYING TAIGIEL

Taigiel affords you, the DM, a chance to portray a heroic ally of the PCs. As a ranger with few spellcasting abilities, Taigiel shouldn't noticeably increase the strain during combat encounters. Conversely, Taigiel might offer an interesting roleplaying challenge for one of your players. In most campaigns, the chance to play a half-dragon is rare, and if a player wants to play Taigiel (and remain true to his motives during this adventure), that's a great option. Taigiel is also an ideal character for a new player who wants to make a one-time "guest star" appearance or seeks to join the group permanently. Finally, you can simplify matters by arranging Taigiel's death or disappearance during one of the early encounters.

3. Skirmish. Give the PCs the opportunity to get word to Cirilli and the rest of Finch's refugees that they can return to their homes. The PCs might choose to conceal or disguise Taigiel, or they might try to convince the local folk not to fear the half-dragon. In any case, begin this encounter as the PCs prepare to depart the hamlet.

A scream comes from the north side of Finch. Where the town's well-trampled square ends and the less-trod North Road begins stand three tall humanoids. Glistening against the icy ground, they are either encased in or made of ice.

Creatures (EL 16): Ice golems are creations of the dragon Acessiwal and his pet wizard, Helios. Sculpted from the coldest, hardest ice, these mindless automata follow the dragon's orders without remorse or pity. They seek out and destroy the threats and annoyances that Acessiwal has foreseen, scryed, or observed.

Ice golems (3): hp 99 each; see the end of the adventure for complete statistics.

Tactics: The ice golems ignore the villagers and even the PCs until attacked (in which case they defend themselves). Instead, they focus on Taigiel, charging toward him and attacking him rather than any other target. The ice golems can fly but have no ranged attacks.

Treasure: The ice golems' bodies aren't made wholly of ice. Each ice golem contains a collection of 10d10 gems, each worth 100 gp.

Development: After this second assault on their hamlet, the people of Finch ask that the PCs take their new friend and leave.

Part II: Across the Winterlands

My love is like to ice, and I to fire:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolved through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat?

—Edmund Spenser

This part of the adventure covers the journey that takes the heroes from Finch to Coldheart, the dragon's lair, a distance of about 500 miles. Along the way, the heroes must overcome formidable monsters, draconic servants, and the climate itself. To their advantage, the PCs can stop in at the city of Latona along the way and ready themselves for the final conflict.

Enforce a sense of urgency in your players. Winter is coming, and the mountain pass through which the PCs must pass shall soon be covered over with ice and snow. Of course, characters can overcome such complications with magic, but who knows what forces the dragon organizes in the meantime?

Effects of the Climate

For simplicity, assume that temperatures south of Latona qualify as cold weather (below 40° F). PCs without a cold weather outfit or magical protection must make a Fortitude save each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage. Refer to "Cold Dangers" on page 86 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for complete rules on weather.

North of Latona, the wintry temperatures fall into the extreme cold category, averaging below 0° F. PCs without winter clothing make Fortitude saves as above once every 10 minutes; those with winter clothing need check only once an hour for exposure damage. Magical protection against cold removes the need for any Fortitude checks.

PCs who suffer damage from cold or exposure are considered fatigued. They cannot run or charge and suffer an effective penalty of -2 to Strength and Dexterity.

Weather: Snow, Storms & Blizzards

Before long, Acessiwal is likely to learn that yet another band of heroes seeks to end his life. In response, the dragon uses his *control weather* ability to make life in the north even more miserable than it already is. Each day, roll percentile dice to determine the local weather condition for the PCs:

d% Roll	Weather Condition
01-40	Clear, cold weather
41-60	Snow
71-90	Snowstorm
91-00	Blizzard

Clear, cold weather and *snow* have no practical effects other than those noted above for climate.

Snowstorms last 2d4 hours and cut visibility in half. Wind speeds of 31-50 mph check all movement of Medium-size or smaller creatures. Characters can crawl or walk for brief periods, but overland progress (including flight) is impossible. Spellcasting in a snowstorm requires a Concentration check (DC 5 + spell level).

Random Encounters

The tundra isn't a land that looks kindly on those that would idle long in its reaches. Every 4 hours, there is a chance of a random encounter. Roll on the table below. Feel free to reroll results that the PCs have already dealt with.

d% Roll	Encounter	EL
01-77	No encounter	—
78-81	Remorhaz (1)	7
82-84	White Dragons (2)	13
85-87	Frost Worm (1)	12
88-90	Frost Giants (5)	14
91	Yrthaks (4)	13
92-93	Bandits (7)	9
94-96	Ice Mephits (10)	10
97	Gargantuan Zombies (12)	13
98-00	Winter Wolves (4)	9

Remorhaz (1): hp 73; *Monster Manual*, page 155.

The remorhaz is a bane to caravans and common travelers. The creature engages from hiding, if possible.

Ice Golems (2): hp 99 each; see end of adventure.

Venturing forth from Coldheart, the golems swoop down to attack the PCs without warning.

Mature Adult White Dragons (2): hp 241 each; *Monster Manual*, page 69.

These mated dragons are Acessiwal's children. They roam the cold lands as they will, looking for food and treasure.

Frost Worm (1): hp 147; *Monster Manual*, page 92.

The frost worm lurks silently beneath the snow until footfalls above encourage it to spring up and attack.

Frost Giants (5): hp 73 each; *Monster Manual*, page 155.

If encountered at night, the giants attack. If encountered during the day, they demand 1,000 gp from each of the PCs for "safe passage" through their land.

Yrthaks (4): hp 102 each; *Monster Manual*, page 189.

These yrthaks hungrily devour all that pass beneath them. If the yrthaks spot the PCs during the day, they wait for night to fall before attacking, taking full advantage of their blindsight.

Bandits, Male Human War3 (7): hp 20 each; hide armor, longspear, short sword, shortbow with 20 arrows.

Keeping close to the North Road, the bandits scavenge out a desperate existence, caught between their greed and their fear of powerful monsters.

Ice Mephits (10): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual*, page 132.

Swarms of ice mephits scout the cold plains in the service of Acessiwal. They do not engage interlopers directly. Instead, they call for four ice golems (EL 17) to assault the PCs. The ice golems arrive in 2d4 hours.

Gargantuan Zombies (12): hp 159 each; *Monster Manual*, page 192.

These slow-moving, reanimated corpses were once giants, but since their deaths they've been magically *enlarged* and pressed into service once again. The zombies wander the cold fields north of Latona and slay anything they encounter.

Winter Wolves (4): hp 51 each; *Monster Manual*, page 184.

The winter wolves try to flank the PCs. They retreat if half their number are slain.

Blizzards last 1d3 days and lay down 1d4 feet of snow. Winds exceed 50 mph. Movement, including flight, is impossible. Casting spells in a blizzard requires a Concentration skill check (DC 10 + spell level).

For full information, see "Weather Hazards" and "Weather" on pages 87 and 89 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Once the dragon is dead or defeated, weather in the tundra plain remains just as cold, but the chances for snowstorms and blizzards drops to the normal levels prescribed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

High-Level Travel

Since the PCs don't have a good idea where they're going, it's almost impossible for them to completely skip over the journey using teleportation or similar magic. Only the most reckless adventurers would risk it, even if they have access to reliable scrying. PCs are more likely to rely on flying magic and spells that increase their speed. At their current level, it's quite possible for the heroes to reach Latona in a single day or two and have Taigiel guide them from there to Coldheart in an equal span of time.

There's nothing wrong with the PCs using their abilities and magic items to reduce or mitigate long and tedious travel time. Use encounters from this section that seem reasonable to have during their accelerated travel. Add a touch of bad weather to delay them once or twice for an encounter and to remind the PCs that they remain, at least somewhat, at the mercy of the elements.

Keyed Encounters (Areas 4–12)

The encounters in this section are essentially event-driven. Recommended locations appear in the area map, but with the exception of those tied to Latona, the encounters in this section can be used wherever you see fit and in whatever order you desire.

4. Cry Wolf. Lurking in the cold reaches is a pack of oversized winter wolves. Fortunately the last of their gigantic kind, these wolves are content to stalk prey for hours and then dig great trenches to hide in. Despite their immense size, they try to conceal themselves before leaping to attack.

Without warning, the snow bank before you collapses, giving way to four enormous, hulking wolves. Each one measures 12 feet tall and 20 feet long, with fangs as long as a human's forearm and snarls that resonate like thunder.

Creatures (EL 16): These winter wolves are huge variants of their kind. They attack the PCs immediately.

Huge Winter Wolves (4): CR 9; Huge Magical Beast (20 ft. long, 12 ft. tall); HD 18d10+126; hp 171 each; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft.; AC 16 (-2 size, +8 natural); Atk +24 (2d6+12/crit 19-20, bite with Improved Critical feat); Face 10 ft. × 20 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SA breath weapon, trip; SQ scent, cold subtype; AL NE; SV Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +8 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 26, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +10 (+7 racial bonus when hiding in areas of snow and ice), Move Silently +11, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +3 (+4 racial bonus when tracking by scent). *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Power Attack.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold (15 feet) every 1d4 rounds; 4d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 16) for half damage. Can use breath weapon while biting.

SA—Trip (Ex): Hit with bite attack allows trip as free action, does not provoke attack of opportunity; if attempt fails, opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

SQ—Cold Subtype: Cold immunity, double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Tactics: These wolves take advantage of their ability to trip opponents freely as part of their attack (and thus deprive opposing combatants of their ability to take full-attack options unless *hasted).* Against foes that are easy to hit, the clever wolves use Power Attack to deal additional damage.

The wolves won't flee until two of their own are dead, and then only if the PCs continue to outnumber them.

Treasure: Unless the PCs manage to track or magically divine the location of the wolves' hollowed-out den, the only treasure they can take here are the wolves' furs, which are valued at 500 gp each. Within the wolves' lair, the PCs can find a pile of 578 gp, two gold diamond rings (2,000 gp each), a suit of full plate (1,500 gp), and a *winged shield.*

5. Troll Tollmen. At the southern end of the mountain pass, two troll fighters have moved in to demand a tariff for passage into the road beyond.

Standing squarely on the North Road are a pair of tents pitched in a cleared-out patch of snow. Between the tents crackles a campfire, over which a slab of meat sizzles enticingly. At the fire are two tall humanoids wrapped in furs. Gray skin is visible beneath the ragged clothing.

If the PCs take the time to approach the trolls without making any aggressive moves, the trolls calmly demand 100 gp (per person) for passage up the North Road. While the sum isn't especially taxing for high-level PCs, when the PCs issue their likely refusal, the trolls attack.

Creatures (EL 15): After many years of raiding, Joltar and Kag have decided to settle down and let their prey come to them. Far more formidable than normal trolls, they are trained veterans who enjoy the benefits of regeneration. Due to their size, the trolls can wield their greataxes with one hand.

Joltar and Kag, Male Troll Ftr8 (2): CR 13; Large Giant (9 feet tall); HD 6d8+36 (troll) plus 8d10+48 (Ftr); hp 195, 205; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (-1 size, +7 natural, +5 armor, +3 shield); Atk +18 melee (1d6+7, 2 claws), +13 melee (1d6+3, bite); or +21/+16/+11 melee (1d12+11/crit 19-20/×3, *+2 greataxe* with Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialization feats); or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+4/crit ×3, masterwork mighty composite longbow); Reach 10 ft.; SA rend 2d6+10; SQ regeneration 5, scent, 90-ft. darkvision; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +6, Will +5 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 24, Dex 14, Con 24, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +9, Hide -4, Jump +9, Listen +3 (includes Alertness feat), Spot +5 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe).

Possessions: Rhino hide (Joltar only), masterwork breastplate (Kag only), *+1 large steel shield, +2 greataxe,* masterwork mighty composite longbow [+4], 25 arrows, sacks of gold (see **Treasure** below).

Tactics: While not particularly bright, Joltar and Kag have learned a few things from years of fighting. They concentrate their attacks on a single target, flanking where possible. Joltar likes to charge foes, dealing double damage thanks to the *rhino hide* armor he wears.

Treasure: Within the tents, the trolls keep 2,800 gp in seven sacks made from sewn frost worm hide.

6. Jolly Greek Giant.

A pink and green maelstrom of energy explodes in the sky above you. The noise is deafening even as the burst of color begins to fade. In its place, a giant falls toward the ground below.

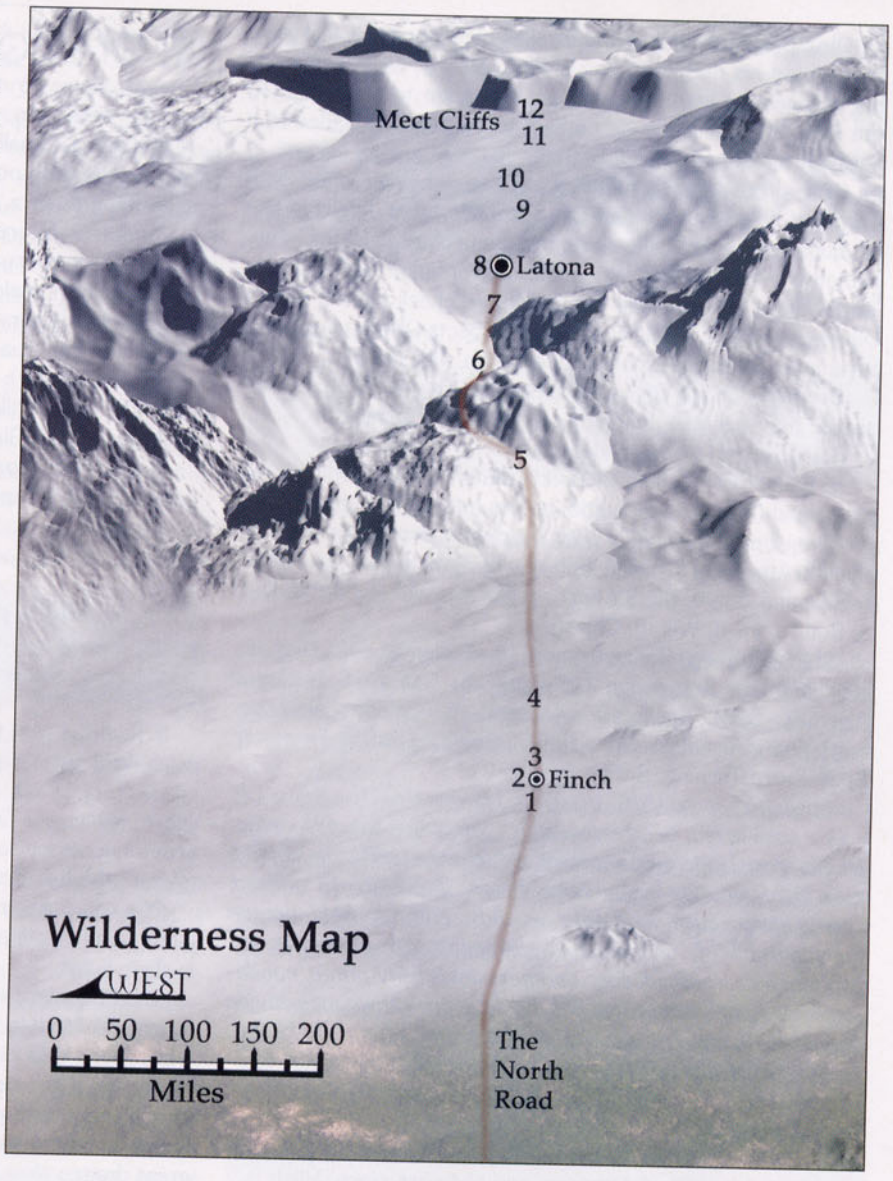
The falling giant is actually a titan—an immortal wanderer of the world and the planes beyond. The PCs can try to stall her 100-foot descent, but should they fail, the fall won't do much more than injure the titan's pride. When the PCs approach, the titan greets them warmly:

"Mortals! So good to see your kind again. I am Kleo, and it is a pleasure to meet you. Now tell me, where am I? And, if you don't mind, what year is it?"

Creature (EL 21): The PCs can learn about Kleo through roleplaying:

- Kleo has been touring the multiverse, wiling away time in Olympus and other lands. She hasn't been back to visit this world for decades.
- Kleo considers it a boon if the PCs can answer the questions she poses about where and when she is. She's unfamiliar with this cold land. She offers to heal any injuries that they've suffered (Kleo is a 20th-level cleric).
- Kleo freely chats with the PCs about her far-flung journeys and in turn listens to their tale and of their quest to slay the dragon. While Kleo is no expert, she offers a few platitudes. She says they should be ready to face the dragon anywhere and in any form, and that they should do their best to surprise the dragon if they must fight it in its lair. She warns them that the dragon might flee to avenge itself if the battle goes poorly. She also advises them to neutralize the dragon's sorceries, if they can. White dragons are fortunately known to be fairly weak in this regard.
- Kleo has business to attend to and cannot join the PCs in their quest.
- Kleo was *teleported* here after she lost a riddle contest with a solar. The PCs can take a crack at the riddle if they like:

I have two heads but one body,
and the stiller I stand, the faster I run.



Kleo knows the answer is not "an ettin in quicksand," which was her reluctant guess. The actual answer is an hourglass, and Kleo rewards the PC who can produce the answer with a *ring of evasion* made for her years ago. "I'll get another," she smiles as she casts *gate*, "after I have a talk with that solar."

Kleo, Female Titan: hp 210; *Monster Manual*, page 176. Kleo casts divine spells as a 20th-level cleric.

Development: Should the PCs decide to attack the titan, she angrily calls down a *fire storm* and then departs via a *gate*.

7. Unholy Pilgrimage.

Oftir, a loathsome cleric of Erythnul, believes that by delivering sacrifices into the dragon's maw, he can impress Acessiwal and earn a high place among his minions. Oftir has gathered a collection of poor, insane, and disaffected men and women to lead to Coldheart—once he determines exactly where the dragon's stronghold is located.

Stretching out before you, a small caravan is working its way slowly north. Forty or so men and women are clumped around a pair of wagons. The groups' progress is impeded by the snow, the stiff wind, and the caravan's size.

Oftir pretends kindness and takes care not to reveal anything about his dark faith or his plans. He's already instructed his followers to say nothing of their mission to strangers. To the PCs, Oftir claims to be nothing more than the leader of a caravan to Latona.

Oftir does attempt to have a private conversation with Taigiel, if he's still with the PCs. Suspecting that Taigiel is one of Acessiwal's agents, the cleric tries to probe Taigiel for information on the dragon's lair. If the conversation occurs, have Taigiel make an untrained Sense Motive check against Oftir's Diplomacy check; if Taigiel wins, he suspects Oftir's true intentions and shares the whole conversation with the PCs.

Creature (EL 14): Oftir represents the only threat here. The rest of the caravan is made up of 37 human commoners (Com1 to Com4) of mixed age and gender.

Oftir, Male Human Clr14 (Erythnul): CR 14; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 14d8; hp 70; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (-1 Dex, +6 *+1 chain shirt*, *+2 ring of protection*, +2 large shield); Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+3, *+2 light mace*); SA spells, rebuke undead; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +13; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +17, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +7, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +6 (includes Alertness feat), Spellcraft +5, Spot +6 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Extra Turning, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (6/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/3+1/3+1/1+1, base DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*create water, cure minor wounds, detect magic, resistance* (×2), *virtue;* 1st—*change self†, command, cure light wounds* (×3), *divine favor, invisibility to undead;* 2nd—*augury, cure moderate wounds, enthrall, hold person* (×2), *invisibility†, undetectable alignment;* 3rd—*bestow curse, blindness/deafness, deeper darkness, invisibility purge, nondetection†, summon monster III;* 4th—*cure critical wounds, divine power, divination, poison, summon monster IV, unholy blight†;* 5th—*circle of doom, false vision†, flame strike, slay living;* 6th—*create undead†, harm* (×2), *word of recall;* 7th—*blasphemy†, destruction.*

†Domain spell. *Domains:* Evil (cast evil spell at +1 caster level), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, large steel shield, *+2 ring of protection, +2 light mace, hat of disguise, potion of invisibility,* scroll of *heal,* scroll of *summon monster VI,* purse with 55 pp and 240 gp.

Tactics: When confronted by powerful-looking strangers, Oftir casts *undetectable alignment.* His *hat of disguise* makes him look like an elderly missionary dressed in heavy furs. If his deception is revealed, he uses his spells to deal as much damage as possible to the PCs and the innocent people in his caravan before escaping via *word of recall.*

Development: If the PCs reveal their mission to Oftir, he feigns disinterest, claiming to want nothing to do with such reckless notions. However, as soon as the PCs leave, Oftir casts *sending* and informs Acessiwal. Four ice golems (EL 17) attack the PCs one hour later.

8. Latona.

High city walls surround the city. Guards can be seen on all of the city's six stone towers, and outside the walls mounted scouts patrol the surrounding land. Here at the end of the earth, Latona survives only through its vigilance, yet the guarded city gates are open.

CITY OF LATONA

Latona is home to many farmers, loggers, smiths, artisans, hunters, fishermen, and merchants.

Latona (Small City): Conventional; AL LN; 15,000-gp limit; Assets 1,185,000 gp; Population 15,787; Mixed (human 79, halfling 6, elf 2, dwarf 10, gnome 1, half-elf 1, half orc 1).

Authority Figures: Lord Jessica Olivet, female human Ari10; Mayor Andruw Stolj, male human Exp8/Com3; Banker Herful Tratern, male human Exp14.

Important Characters: Ponner Jaxen, male human War11 (captain of the guard); Rydel Gorgonoth, male dwarf Ftr14 (guard lieutenant); Nedith Boornow, male human Clr12 (Pelor/healer); Willema Undarn, female human Clr8 (St. Cuthbert/judge); Girm Befuss, male human Exp8 (merchant); Ijo Daihu, male gnome Wiz10 (wizard); Lasom the Large, male gnome Brd8 (librarian); Elambert Duke, male half-elf Com1 (innkeeper).

If Taigiel is with the party, he offers to wait outside the city gates. Without a disguise of some kind (or the *hat of disguise* taken from Oftir), his appearance in Latona causes fear or scorn. Numerous Diplomacy or Bluff checks (DC 20+) should prove necessary to convince the city's guards and leaders to tolerate the half-dragon's presence.

PCs can purchase supplies and perhaps a few magic items (such as protection against the fierce cold) that they can use in their quest.

The PCs might seek a sage or bard for more information on Acessiwal. Most locals direct them to either Ijo Daihu, a gnome wizard who sells his services (and Divination spells), or Lasom the Large, a gnome bard who keeps a private historical reference library. Lasom is the more useful of the two, as he has heard and read stories of confrontations with Acessiwal. The great dragon slew all but a few of his would-be hunters in the past hundred years, but a few legends tell of heroes who managed to drive off the dragon. Indeed, an ancient song makes sport of "Acessiwal the Yellow," a cowardly beast of the north.

The shopkeepers and innkeepers of Latona are naturally garrulous, and they express their curiosity about the high-level adventurers. That's the real danger: First, there are many citizens of Latona who do their best to discourage the PCs from earning the dragon's ire and endangering the peace. The dragon hasn't attacked Latona in more than a generation, and no one wants that to change. More importantly, the dragon has spies in Latona who forward messages to him and his minions. If the PCs speak openly of their quest, they invite two encounters (**8a** and **8b**) upon themselves.

8a. Death by Poison. A servant of the dragon pays the PCs a visit—preferably at night while they rest or when they split up to secure supplies, uncover information, or shop.

Creature (EL 15): Tomar, a spy and assassin, is a freelance operative who receives large financial rewards from lords and villains who need to exterminate troublesome pests. He's arrogant and cold-blooded but takes no real pleasure in his ghastly

work. He waits for opportunities to attack lone PCs, taking full advantage of his special abilities and spells.

Tomar, Male Human Rog7/Asn8: CR 15; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 15d6; hp 64; Init +6 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+6 Dex, +4 *+2 leather armor, +2 cloak of the bat);* Atk +19/+14 melee (1d6+4/crit 17-20, *+2 keen short sword* with Weapon Finesse and Weapon Focus feats); or +17/+12 ranged (1d6+3/crit ×3, mighty composite shortbow, *+1 arrows*); SA sneak attack (+8d6), death attack, poison use, spells; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge, +4 to saves against poison; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +17, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 21, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Balance +12, Bluff +13, Climb +13, Disable Device +9, Disguise +14, Escape Artist +11, Gather Information +13, Hide +20, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +2, Jump +11, Listen +14 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +20, Open Lock +14, Search +12, Sense Motive +5, Spot +15 (includes Alertness feat), Tumble +15, Use Magic Device +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Expertise, Improved Trip, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Finesse (short sword).

SA–Death Attack: After studying an unaware target for 3 rounds, the assassin can paralyze or kill (Fortitude save DC 21) by choice with a successful sneak attack.

SA–Poison Use: Can use poison (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 79-80) without fear of misapplication.

Spells Prepared (3/2/2/1, base DC = 13 + spell level): 1st–*ghost sound, obscuring mist, spider climb;* 2nd–*alter self, pass without trace;* 3rd–*deeper darkness, nondetection;* 4th–*improved invisibility.*

Possessions: +2 leather armor, +2 keen short sword, mighty composite shortbow [+2], 20 *+1 arrows, cloak of the bat,* 3 doses of purple worm poison (Injury; Fortitude save DC 24; 1d6/1d6 temporary Str damage), 10 doses of wyvern poison (Injury; Fortitude save DC 17, 2d6/2d6 temporary Con damage), 5 doses of oil of taggit (Ingested; Fortitude save DC 15; 0/unconsciousness), 5 *potions of invisibility.*

Tactics: Tomar approaches his victims invisibly with a poisoned blade. If his death attack fails, Tomar uses his spells or *cloak of the bat* to withdraw immediately.

Development: Should Tomar be captured alive (or *raised,* or contacted via *speak with dead),* he resists revealing information. Should the PCs successfully bribe or intimate him, he reveals that he normally receives orders via a magical *sending* from a wizard named Helios. In this instance, however, the wizard met Tomar personally and gave him 2,000 gp in gems per PC (the gems are currently stashed in Tomar's secret residence). Tomar knows nothing about Helios aside from his name and vocation.

8b. Ice Fright. The moment they leave Latona, five ice golems attack the PCs in the wilderness.

Creatures (EL 18): Ice golems become a more familiar sight as the PCs approach, and ultimately enter, Coldheart.

Ice Golems (5): hp 99 each; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: Each golem contains a collection of 10d10 gems, worth 100 gp apiece.

Development: If Taigiel is still with the PCs once they leave Latona, he continues to guide them north toward his father's lair. When he was first invited to join the ranks of the white dragon's forces, Taigiel received directions to Coldheart from Helios, Acessiwal's powerful wizard-servant. Helios instructed Taigiel to wait near the Mect Cliffs, where a river extends from under the cliff out into the tundra. There he would be met by one of Acessiwal's patrols.

Taigiel has never seen his father's new lair, so he can provide no detailed description of Coldheart. The directions he received are somewhat vague. However, PCs can use spells such as *divination, commune,* or *discern location* to help locate Coldheart.

9. Mastodon Herd.

Two dozen enormous beasts lumber across the snowy plain in a great herd. Their hulking, brown forms cannot conceal the large white tusks.

These mastodons ignore the PCs if they fly around or move to avoid them. If the PCs approach within 100 feet, four of the mastodons charge. Another four follow the charge in the next round. The rest of the herd–noncombatants–moves away until the fighting is done.

Creatures (EL 16): There are eight adult mastodons and sixteen noncombative offspring. The mastodons feel little pain, and they refuse to run until half their fighting number are dead. Evolution has taught the mastodon to be fierce in the defense of its offspring.

Adult Mastodons (8): hp 200 each; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: Should the PCs have the means to carry several tons of skins and the inclination to spend a day skinning, each adult mastodon skin is worth 500 gp. Each noncombatant mastodon skin is worth 200 gp.

10. Yevilindra. Acessiwal has slain all rivals for dominance in the cold lands, but his children and grandchildren are generally allowed to fester and bicker over scraps. Yevilindra is just such a beast–a juvenile white dragon.

Around a rocky cleft you hear the crunch of bone and tear of flesh. A relatively small white dragon–6 feet long from nose to tail–is devouring a furry mastodon. The dragon's stomach is already bloated from its feast.

Creature (EL 5): The juvenile dragon, Yevilindra, is no fool. Once she sees well-armed PCs, she takes flight. If she cannot flee, the dragon surrenders.

Yevilindra, Female Juvenile White Dragon (1): hp 102; *Monster Manual,* page 69.

Treasure: Yevilindra's lair can be found a few miles away through Divination magic or by extracting the information from the subdued dragon. The lair is a humble bear cave, and beneath a pile of furs can be found a *pearl of power* (3rd level) and a collection of coins and jewelry worth 900 gp total.

Development: Never having visited Coldheart, Yevilindra cannot reveal its location to the PCs. To save her life, she will perform any task the PCs assign her. Of course, she does her best to escape at the earliest opportunity.

If any PC elects to keep some trophy of their triumph over Yevilindra, especially dragon blood, make a note of it. It could prove useful later.

11. Fallen Army. This encounter serves multiple purposes. First, it's a challenge for the PCs to overcome. Second, it offers some chance for the PCs to secure allies. Finally, if the party has lost Taigiel and been reduced to wandering the tundra in a forlorn effort to locate Coldheart, this encounter affords PCs a chance to discover a new source of information.

Rumbling over the snow-covered hill are four great, furry mastodons. Despite their immense bulk, they move quickly through the snow. Each of them bears a rider: a pale-skinned, white-haired giant.

The frost giants once dominated the north lands, threatening Latona and the dragon alike. Following their defeat at the hands of Acessiwal and his minions, they've been reduced to nomadic wanderers, hiding out on the tundra plains, fearing a dragon that no longer considers them worth its attention.

The frost giants make no effort at stealth, and the PCs have a chance to avoid or ambush the frost giants. If the PCs are on foot, the frost giant patrol is moving directly toward them; if they are flying, the giants pass beneath them.

The PCs have a singular chance to parley. Once battle is joined, it's unlikely that the fierce giants ever come out of their frenzy, and their veteran leader won't hear cries for a truce once the PCs have struck down one of his comrades.

Creatures (EL 18): Kotnar, once the jarl of a prosperous tribe, now leads only six warriors—and three of these watch over the tribe's tents 20 miles away. Kotnar, Hullek, Dennen, and Ertu patrol the area surrounding the tribe's current camp.

Kotnar, Male Frost Giant Tribal Protector6: CR 15; Large Giant (Cold) (16 ft. tall); HD 14d8+84 (giant) plus 6d10+36 (tribal protector); hp 226; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 80 ft.; AC 27 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural, +4 chain shirt, +3 terrain AC bonus); Atk +25/+20/+15/+10 melee (2d8+4/crit ×3, *+3 Huge greataxe*); or +18/+13/+8/+3 ranged (2d6+10, rock); Reach 10 ft.; SA tribal enemy, smite, wild fighting; SQ terrain AC bonus, rock catching, cold subtype; AL CE; SV Fort +21, Ref +12, Will +8; Str 30, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +9, Climb +17, Intimidate +9, Intuit Direction +7, Jump +27, Sense Motive +6, Spot +11, Swim +12, Wilderness Lore +5. *Feats:* Blind-fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Sunder.

SA—Tribal Enemy (Ex): Against Coldheart denizens, Kotnar gains a +3 bonus to Bluff and Sense Motive skill checks; he also gains a +3 damage bonus against Coldheart denizens that are not immune to critical hits and not more than 30 feet away.

SA—Wild Fighting (Ex): As a free action during his initiative, Kotnar can enter a wild fighting state for 1 round, gaining an extra attack, but all attacks in the round (including attacks of opportunity) suffer a -2 penalty.

SA—Smite (Ex): Usable 1/day. Kotnar can declare a smite with a single melee attack, giving a +4 attack and damage bonus against member of tribal enemy (Coldheart denizens).

SQ—Terrain AC Bonus: When fighting in the tundra, Kotnar gains a +3 AC bonus.

SQ—Rock Catching (Ex): Once per round, as a free action, Kotnar can attempt to catch a rock that would otherwise strike him. He must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 15, Small rock; DC 20, Medium-size rock; DC 25 Large rock) to do so.

SQ—Cold Subtype: Cold immunity, double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Possessions: Chain shirt, *+3 Huge greataxe, boots of striding and springing,* jar of *Keoghtom's ointment* (4 applications), *stone of good luck,* 2d6 Medium-size rocks, gold armband set with blue sapphires (3,000 gp).

Hullek, Dennen, and Ertu, Male Frost Giants (3): hp 133 each, *Monster Manual,* page 98; chain shirt, Huge greataxe, 2d6 Medium-size rocks, 10d10 gp in purse.

Mastodons (4): hp 200 each; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Tactics: The giants stay mounted as long as possible, prodding the mastodons to trample and gore foes. Meanwhile, the giants hurl rocks stored in bags slung alongside their saddles. The giants switch to their greataxes against foes within 10 feet. Should the fight go against the giants, they attempt to flee back toward their camp for reinforcements. If they cannot elude the PCs, they fight to the death. Unless magically induced, they refuse to surrender.

Development: Should the PCs hail the frost giants from the start or before combat begins in earnest, Kotnar responds with a cautious willingness to talk. Kotnar knows his tribe is too weak to engage in frivolous battles, and fighting a group of adventurers isn't going to help him rebuild.

Roleplay through the discussion with Kotnar. He's basically willing to let the PCs pass unmolested unless they're rude or insulting. He might warn PCs of the local politics ("North of Latona, the dragon rules.") and discuss the cold weather and other trivialities ("Bit cold for you short 'uns, isn't it?").

Revelations about the PCs' mission or propositions of an alliance catch Kotnar's interest. If the PCs intend to slay the dragon and Kotnar thinks they might succeed, he informs them that Acessiwal and the frost giants were at war for a long time, but the dragon emerged victorious. Indeed, the dragon now amuses itself by capturing giants as slaves. Roleplay through the discussion, and then use the following rules (or your discretion) to determine Kotnar's ultimate reaction.

The giants' initial attitude is unfriendly. They won't attack the PCs without provocation, but they generally wish them ill. To change that attitude, a PC must make a successful Charisma (or Diplomacy) check. If the PCs reveal their quest, apply a +5 bonus to the check. Other PCs who make a successful Charisma check (DC 10) can assist the lead PC (granting an additional +2 bonus) by appearing formidable. In addition, if the PCs pledge to free any frost giants imprisoned in the dragon's lair, apply a second +5 bonus to the roll.

On a result of 5 or less, the giants become hostile. On a result of 15 or more, they become indifferent but are unwilling to do more than offer vague advice. For a bribe, they offer to reveal the location of Coldheart, though they are ignorant of its actual entrances. On a result of 25 or better, the giants become friendly (but not trustworthy), and Kotnar offers to send one of his warriors with the party to render aid. Kotnar tells the PCs where he believes Coldheart lies. On a result of 40 or more, the giants become helpful (though still not trustworthy), and Kotnar himself offers to join the party's mission to slay Acessiwal.

TRIBAL PROTECTOR

This prestige class is described in *Sword and Fist* (pages 35-36). If this D&D accessory is unavailable, make Kotnar the frost giant a 6th-level fighter or barbarian instead.

Rules for roleplaying encounters such as this one can be found in the "NPC Attitudes" section on page 149 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Ad Hoc Experience Adjustment: If the PCs successfully parley with the giants and convince them to help against the dragon, award full experience for the encounter. If they convince Kotnar himself to come along, award an additional 5,000 experience points.

12. Coldheart Environs. The PCs' information places the dragon's lair here, against the Mect Cliffs (named for an ancient barbarian hero). Rising a sheer 600 feet into the air, the cliffs are actually quite difficult to make out, especially in the snow.

A river sheathed in broken ice flows sluggishly out from beneath the ice wall, forming the most obvious entrance into the dragon's lair: a 20-foot-wide, 30-foot-tall orifice draped with toothlike icicles (area **16**). To the left of this tunnel and 30 feet up the glacial wall is a dry tunnel entrance (area **13**) with a narrow ledge. The third entrance is not obvious, is located at the top of the 600-foot-high glacier, and involves breaking or punching through the top of the glacier into Acessiwal's cavernous abode (area **58**).

"Coldheart" is the name given to the entire complex, which consists of several sections or levels. The Entrance Level (see areas **13-17**) details the most visible entrances—one real and one false. Acessiwal's minions inhabit the Middle, Lower, and Upper Levels of the complex (see areas **18-57**), while the topmost level of the complex is dominated by the dragon's cavernous lair (see area **58**).

Creatures (EL 7 for mephits, 16 for ice golems): As long as the PCs stay within sight of the Mect Cliffs, they are likely to encounter patrols of four ice mephits. These patrols fly about a one-mile radius of Coldheart looking for prey, invaders, or deserters. Their duty, for the most part, does not involve confronting those they discover but in reporting their discoveries to Helios. The wizard then dispatches a team of three ice golems to deal with the problem. Flying through the air, the ice golems can reach their targets within minutes.

- **Ice Mephits (4):** hp 13 each; *Monster Manual*, page 132.
- **Ice Golems (3):** hp 99 each; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Clever Tricks

It's impossible to foresee every stratagem that the PCs might devise. As the DM, you must be prepared to respond to ideas—both ingenious and foolish—that your players come up with. Be sure to read through all of the encounters that follow so that you can predict likely responses from the monsters and NPCs. Here are some scenarios that playtesters came up with:

Letting Taigiel go in: In this plan, the PCs hide somewhere while Taigiel presents himself. Taigiel has "changed his mind" and "wishes to join his proud draconic father." (Even if Taigiel dies earlier in the adventure, a magically disguised PC could appear as Taigiel and slip inside.)

This plan has a reasonable chance of success. Taigiel, once met by a patrol, is invited inside by Helios, who uses *dimension door* spells to enter and leave Coldheart. After a conversation with Helios, Taigiel is taken to guest quarters (area **46**) where he can rest before meeting Acessiwal. An ice mephit is assigned to answer questions and act as a servant, and a pair of ice golems watch over the guest. At this point, Taigiel might choose to escape with what he's learned; if not, he'll soon be exposed to his father's paranoid nature. (A white wyrm knows all about treachery.) Suspecting that his half-dragon son might be after something, Acessiwal instructs Helios to use his *crystal ball* and *detect thoughts* spell to glean what he can.

Using* find the path *to pinpoint Acessiwal's location: A *find the path* spell allows PCs to follow the most direct route to the dragon. The layout of Coldheart is such that PCs can reach the dragon's cave (area **58**) while avoiding all of Acessiwal's high-ranking servants. This is deliberate, as it is unlikely that the PCs will get far before they are detected by the scrying dragon. If the PCs make a bee-line for Acessiwal, the dragon waits until

they are close before alerting the entire complex with a deafening roar. This brings all of Coldheart's defenses to bear, and PCs will likely find themselves battling Acessiwal and all of his minions at once.

Watching and waiting: In addition to wasting time and preparations, the PCs must avoid Acessiwal's mephit sentinels and Helios' ice golem vanguards (see above). After an hour or more of surveillance, PCs can confirm that the mephits and the ice golems always enter and leave through the river tunnel entrance (area **16**), never the false entrance (area **13**). If the PCs remain nearby for more than an hour, they are detected by Helios or Acessiwal, both of whom can scry, and neither of whom is comfortable entrusting Coldheart's security solely to the mephits. If the PCs are detected, Acessiwal instructs Helios and his evil half-dragon son Samakel to assemble a force to capture or destroy the interlopers.

Part III: Coldheart

War has not wholly wrecked us; still
Strong hands, brave hearts, high souls are ours
Proud consciousness of quenchless powers
A Past whose memory makes us thrill
Futures uncharactered, to fill
With heroisms–if we will.

–Margaret Junkin Preston

The PCs have demonstrated a measure of their power to come this far. They've weathered the elements and the cold, long reach of their enemy to get here. Now they dare to venture into a dragon's lair, the seat of its power. Acessiwal knows the terrain and has every opportunity to prepare. He has numerous allies to help win the day. Indeed, the heroes must be especially brave or foolish. To succeed, they'll have to be strong, clever, and more than a little lucky.

Dungeon Features

The following features are true unless otherwise noted in a specific area description.

Walls: With the exception of the mine areas, the walls of Coldheart are sculpted clean and smooth. Climbing the walls of the dungeon is difficult (DC 25) unless otherwise noted.

Cliff: The cliff is 600 feet tall and covered in slippery ice (Climb check DC 30). Search DCs for each of the three entrances can be found in the descriptions for areas **13**, **16**, and **58** respectively.

Doors: Most doors in the complex are made of smooth stone, although a few doors (noted in the text) are sculpted from ice. Unless noted otherwise, doors are unlocked.

All doors possess small, one-quarter-inch gaps between the bottom of the door and the dungeon floor. They open into a chamber from a corridor or larger chamber.

Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 28).

Ice Door: 3 in. thick; Hardness 6; hp 40; Break (DC 26).

Light: Darkness reigns complete unless noted otherwise in a room's description.

Ceiling Height: Except when noted otherwise, ceiling height is 20 feet.

Cold: Coldheart offers no protection against extreme cold, although there are no other weather effects. See "Effects of the Climate" at the start of Part II of the adventure.

Magical Travel Within Coldheart

While the dungeon's inhabitants might act in response and do their best to counter these forms of travel, no inherent magic prevents the PCs from moving magically inside Coldheart.

Teleport: This spell requires the PCs to be familiar with the layout of Coldheart; it can't transport the spellcaster to places she has never seen. Scrying or clandestine scouting might enable PCs to visualize a destination, although there's still a chance that the *teleport* might miss the mark (see page 264 of the *Player's Handbook).* PCs who want to "teleport 10 feet east" are better off using *dimension door.* This spell allows the spellcaster to specify distance and direction, although they run the risk of being temporarily hurled into the Astral plane (as described in the *dimension door* spell's description in the *Player's Handbook,* page 195).

Passwall: A *passwall* spell works normally through stone, even stone mixed with ice.

Gaseous Form: Using *gaseous form* or similar effects allows PCs to penetrate most areas of the Coldheart, unless noted otherwise.

Ethereal Travel: *Ethereal jaunt* and similar powers can move an individual through Coldheart unless noted otherwise.

Entrance Level (Areas 13–17)

This section details the false lair (areas 13-15) and the underground river entrance (areas 16-17).

13. False Entrance. Acessiwal is cunning and uses this false lair to eliminate many who desire his ancient hide for a prize. This entrance is partially concealed, misleading foolhardy heroes into thinking that they have made some great discovery.

Covering the mouth of this 10-foot-wide tunnel is a thick white fur cleverly bolted into place. In fact, it is single wolf fur that has been permanently *enlarged.* Since this effect leaves a lasting magical aura on the fur, it further encourages discovery by anyone with the power to *detect magic.* With *detect magic,* discovery of the hidden entrance is automatic. The hidden entrance can also be detected with a successful Search or Spot check (DC 20).

Behind the white fur curtain, a 20-foot-wide tunnel extends into darkness. Great icicles cling to the 25-foot-high, roughly hewn ceiling like sharp teeth.

Without illumination, darkvision, or magic, it's almost impossible to avoid the **Trap** that lies just behind the curtain. The Lernaean cryohydra in area **15** knows of the trap's existence and avoids it.

Trap (EL 8): A 20-foot-wide by 30-foot-long section of the floor drops away on spring-loaded hinges, revealing an empty 100-foot pit glazed with ice. The sides of the tunnel are sheer and impossible to climb without magical assistance or climbing gear. The spring hinges automatically raise the trap plate back into position 1 round after the pit opens. Opening the pit from below isn't especially difficult, given that the trap automatically opens when weight is applied from above. A Disable Device skill check (DC 24) or Strength check (DC 15) is required to manipulate the trap to open.

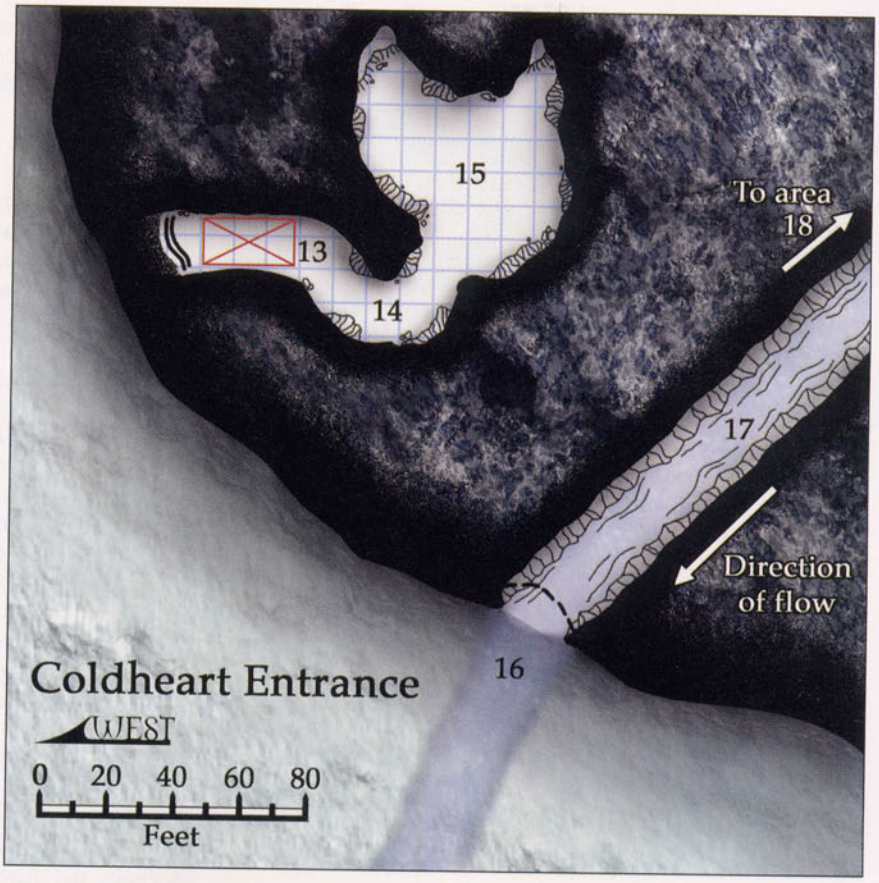
Pit Trap (100 feet deep): CR 8; 10d6 points of damage, Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 24).

14. Delayed Blast Fire. An inscribed rune, now half-buried under translucent ice on the floor, is the only clue that a magical **Trap** can be activated here.

Trap (EL 10): While he designed this trap to keep the cryohydra confined in area **15**, Helios would be happy if adventurers fell prey to the *delayed blast fireball* that activates whenever a creature steps or flies into the area beyond the pit trap. The effect can be triggered only once, after which the rune fades.

***Delayed Blast Fireball* Trap:** CR 10; 16d6 points of damage, Reflex save (DC 24) for half damage; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 32).

Development: In addition to the trap itself, a *permanent alarm* spell has been placed here by Helios, sending a mental message to him when the *delayed blast fireball* activates. Helios *dimension doors* to the area invisibly to check the passage after an hour. If the PCs are still here, he sends four ice golems from his lab (area **43**) to deal with the PCs, watching the battle via his *crystal ball*. If he comes here and the cryohydra is dead, Helios leaves and alerts Acessiwal that intruders might be within Coldheart. See the "We're Being Watched" sidebar.



15. Not a Dragon. The text below assumes that the PCs have some means of seeing in the dark. The cryohydra that lurks in this cave has darkvision to 60 feet.

> Twelve serpentine heads with amber eyes surmount a hulking form 20 feet long and 20 feet wide. The heads reach up another 10 feet into the air, with jets of air gushing from every mouth.

A cryohydra is chained to the middle of the north wall, although its heads can reach prey anywhere in the cave and as far as 10 feet down the south tunnel. Fighting the Lernaean cryohydra is a merely a tax on the party's resources. There is no treasure to be had here and no exits other than the one the PCs entered through.

Creature (EL 15): A slashing weapon must deal 10 or more points to sever one of the Lernaean cryohydra's heads, and excess damage is lost. In addition, a severed head that isn't cauterized by 5 points of fire or acid damage grows back into two heads in 1d4 rounds.

This poor, dumb creature isn't truly evil, though it is angry, frustrated, and hungry. It fights to the death if confronted, although *speak with monster* and *charm monster* spells could force the creature to desist.

Twelve-headed Lernaean Cryohydra (1): hp 126; *Monster Manual*, page 122.

Development: If the PCs break the cryohydra's chain, the beast remains where it is. It fears the traps in areas **13** and **14**.

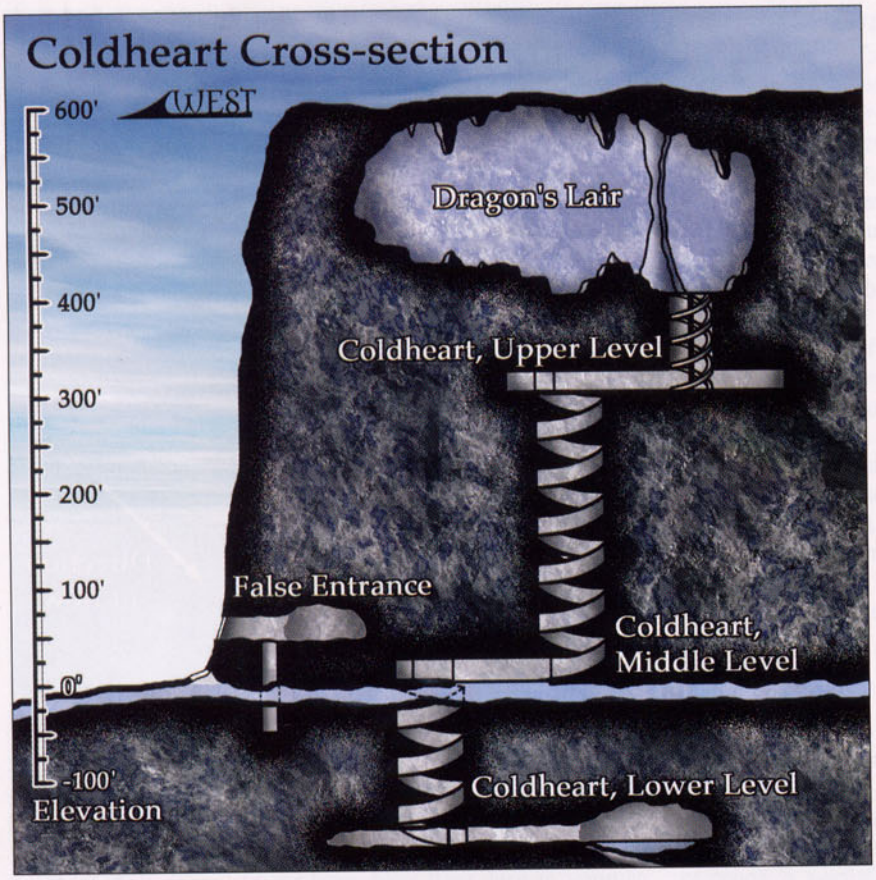
Bolted Iron Chain: 3 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 90; Break (DC 34).

16. Hole in the Ice. The more hidden (but more commonly used) entrance to Coldheart lies here. A 20-foot square opening in the ice allows passage into the river below. Other than this patch, the river is covered with a layer of ice thick enough to support up 500 pounds per 5-foot square.

Helios has made the task of finding the entrance difficult by cloaking it with an illusion. Unless the PCs know where to look, finding the gap in the ice requires a successful Search check (DC 35). Using *true seeing* or similar magic, the hole in the ice can be found without a check.

Ice-cold water completely submerges the passage leading to the dragon's lair. The underwater river is pitch black, and neither torches nor lanterns function underwater. The river moves at a stiff pace, and the PCs must proceed upstream. Swim checks (DC 20) are required each round to move upstream (at the rate one-half normal speed per round). Each Swim check is made with a cumulative -1 penalty since the heroes are underwater (negate this penalty if a PC has a means to breathe water). Don't forget armor check and encumbrance penalties. If a Swim check fails, the PC begins to drown, assuming that no *water breathing* spell is in effect. See page 85 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for drowning rules.

The cold water quickly absorbs a body's warmth. Regardless of cold weather clothing, a PC must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) each round or sustain 1d6 points of subdual damage. Checks are required as long as the character is underwater and clothed in wet, freezing garments. Magical protection against cold prevents all effects. Remember that any PC who suffers damage from cold or exposure is considered fatigued. They cannot run or charge and suffer an



effective penalty of -2 to Strength and Dexterity. All told, the heroes must travel 250 feet underwater. Assuming no stops, the trip takes an average human 17 rounds.

Taigiel needs magical assistance to make the trip, as will any frost giant ally the PCs have brought along.

Development: Magical assistance or divination spells may point the way for the PCs, yet still the PCs might not find this hole. Should they try to carve or blast their own way, use the following rules. Consider the ice sheet to be a wall lying flat. (See Dungeon Features on page 106 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.) The ice sheet averages 1-2 feet thick, with a Break DC of 50 and hardness 8. Each 10-foot by 10-foot section has 300 hit points; fire damage is doubled, and the ice sheet is immune to cold damage.

17. Wormbait. Unbeknownst to the dragon or its servants, a purple worm has taken up residence in this underwater tunnel in the past week. It's not likely to remain long, given the insufficient food supply, but for the time being it poses a threat to anyone using the water passage.

Creature (EL 13): The purple worm is hungry, and a party of adventures is on the menu. It is traveling southwest down the river tunnel, with the current.

Purple Worm (1): hp 200; *Monster Manual*, page 122.

Tactics: The purple worm's plan is simply to swallow a character—or two, if they're size Small—and then burrow away to digest. Following the purple worm through the tunnels it digs is nearly impossible, except for those in the worm's stomach.

Ad Hoc Experience Adjustment: Fighting in a cold underwater environment makes the battle much more difficult. Give the PCs a 2,000-XP bonus for their victory.

Middle Level (Areas 18–27)

This level is the least-inhabited and least visited. However, it contains connections to the upper and lower levels.

PCs might avail themselves of a chance to to rest and recuperate. Unless the dragon and its servants are actively searching for invaders, roll 1d100 once every hour to determine whether the PCs face a random encounter:

01-75: No encounter.
76-90: 1d4 mephits from area **26**.
91-95: 1 ettin from area **27**.
96-98: Use the random encounter table for the Upper Level, re-rolling "No encounter" results.
99-00: Use the random encounter table for the Lower Level, re-rolling "No encounter" results.

18. Safe Shore. Draconic servants and adventurers can enter the dragon's lair by means of the underwater river, which breaks through the floor of this unlit, 100-foot-long, 80-foot-wide chamber. PCs who are swimming without checking the surface above them pass right by if they don't have a light source or some means to see the chamber above. Those who continue swimming upstream continue for another two miles before the river breaks out on the plateau overlooking the Mect Cliffs.

The room is cold and slightly damp. A pile of old bear furs lies in the northwest corner of the room. They're cold but can help dry off drenched characters. Two rusty scythes, doubtless stolen from some irate farmer long ago, lie on the floor near the bear rugs; they're used to break holes in the ice sheet over the river when necessary. PCs who make a successful Search check (DC 20) can notice that numerous heavy tracks, including wheeled tracks, extend from the doors to the north to the river opening.

Treasure: A thorough examination of the southeast corner and a successful Search check (DC 30) reveals a long-forgotten cache hidden under a sliding piece of rock. Under the rock, a 2-foot-square compartment contains eight frozen potions: *darkvision* (×2), *invisibility* (×2), *swimming* (×2), and *water breathing* (×2). Frozen potions must be heated and thawed before they can be imbibed.

19. Entry Hall. The walls of this 20-foot-wide, 20-foot-high, 130-foot-long corridor are set with five sets of double doors. Large footprints criss-cross the hall, but it's impossible to distinguish the old tracks from the new. Among the footprints, PCs can distinguish wheel tracks (suggesting a cart) extending from the southernmost set of doors (leading to area **18**) to the northernmost set of doors (leading to area **24**).

20. Storage. Dozens of crates, trunks, and barrels have been stacked in two rows in the middle of this unlit room. The containers hold various mundane items: blankets, bedrolls, tents, lanterns, sacks, ropes, waterskins, and the like.

In one of his musings years ago, Acessiwal dreamed of having a humanoid army at his command, and this stockpile was the result. Many of the trunks and barrels have frozen shut and must be pried or smashed open.

Wooden Trunk or Barrel: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 17).

Creatures (EL 1): A pair of 8-foot-long centipedes have wandered up from the lower level to make a temporary nest here. They attack if the PCs disturb the room's contents.

Medium-Size Monstrous Centipedes (2): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual*, page 207.

21. Hidden Storage. Dozens of years ago, when the dragon employed humanoid servants to expand its lair, one hopeful fellow crafted this hidden chamber during the construction phase. A hidden lever on the north wall (Search DC 30) causes the secret door to click audibly, revealing and unlocking it.

Within the secret chamber are eight outfits of winter clothing (Medium-size) and a modest collection of masterwork weapons (see **Treasure** below). The food that was once stored here has long since rotted away.

The denizens of Coldheart never learned of this chamber's existence and remain ignorant to the present.

Treasure: The masterwork weapons hidden in this secret chamber include: three morningstars, three light hammers, two heavy picks, two longspears, and a dwarven waraxe.

22. Greeting Room. The stone doors leading to this room are airtight and require a successful Strength check (DC 20) to open. The doors are slightly warm to the touch but otherwise unremarkable.

> A rush of warm air greets you. You stare into a 50-foot-long by 40-foot-wide chamber furnished with a 10-foot-long table surrounded by six comfortable, oversized chairs. In the far corner, steam rises from an ornate silver brazier.

The temperature in this room is much like a warm autumn day (70° F). The brazier (see **Treasure** below) is hot but does not deal damage unless a PC insists on maintaining contact. The table and chairs are comfortable but otherwise plain.

A successful Search check (DC 23) reveals a pair of concealed levers, one set into the northeast corner, the other in the southeast corner. The northeast lever activates the bed trap in area **23** and is currently set in the "off" position. Pulling the southeast lever sets the **Trap**.

Trap (EL 5): Pulling the concealed lever in the southeast corner closes and locks both sets of doors to the chamber. The following round, hidden bellows and vents within the chamber's ceiling suck all the air out of the room. The air evacuates in 1 round, leaving creatures within to suffocate.

Suffocation Trap: CR 5; suffocation (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 88); Reflex save (DC 30) avoids; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 30).

Treasure: The *brazier of warmth* isn't attached to the floor and can be removed. Any PC holding the *brazier* without some protection against heat takes damage.

Brazier of Warmth: This silver brazier heats a 30-foot-radius area to a comfortable warm temperature (70° F). The effect can be activated or deactivated by a command word. The *brazier*'s sphere of warmth provides no protection against magical cold attacks or breath weapons. The effect doesn't extend through walls or under doors, and it has no effect in areas in which the temperature is already warm or hot.

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *flaming sphere; Market Price:* 1,500 gp; *Weight:* 12 lb.

23. Guest Chamber. This room is set aside for guests whom the dragon does not trust. It also contains a **Trap** to dispose of unwanted vermin. The stone doors to this chamber, much like those in area **22**, form a perfect, airtight seal on all edges.

> A steaming silver brazier provides warmth to this room. In the opposite corner stands a large, comfortable bed draped in heavy blankets and ornate covers.

No monsters are lurking under the bed, but a character who decides to take a nap is in for a ride.

Trap (EL 6): The bed is rigged to collapse, allowing mattress and the occupant to fall into a 50-foot deep pit below. At the bottom of the stone pit is a growth of green slime. The lever in area **22** activates the trap, so unless the PCs have activated the lever, the bed is safe to rest upon.

Green Slime Pit (50 feet deep): CR 6; no attack roll necessary, 5d6 points of damage plus green slime (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 117); Reflex save (DC 30) avoids; Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 20).

Treasure: The *brazier of warmth* isn't attached to the floor and can be removed if a character has some protection against heat. See area **22** for a description of this magic item.

24. Connecting Hall. This corridor allows access to the Lower Level and Upper Level. Since there is little traffic between the various levels, this corridor is empty most of the time.

The west passage spirals down to area **28**. The east passage spirals up to area **42** and features a well-hidden secret door (Search DC 35) leading to area **27**. Both passages slope at a 20-degree angle.

Murder holes set into the north wall allow the occupants of areas **26** and **27** to watch the tunnel for intruders.

Development: Unless the PCs use magic or stealth to enter and navigate this hall, the ettin sentinel in area **27** spots them (through one of the murder holes) and orders the ice mephits in area **26** to ready the *forcecage* trap in area **25**. He then uses his *helm of teleportation* to warn the dragon of intruders, returning here with reinforcements to battle PCs who are not trapped by the *forcecage* (see area **25** for details).

25. Trapped in a Cage. This 20-foot-square room is where the defenders of this level hope to ambush the PCs and imprison them until reinforcements arrive to slay them.

Trap (EL 7): Pulling the lever in area **26** activates a 20-foot-square, barred *forcecage*. The cage effectively traps creatures within the chamber. The cage persists for 12 hours or until shut off by pulling the lever in area **26**. The trap does not recharge; thus, the *forcecage* can remain active for a total of 12 hours before the trap is effectively disabled.

Rogues have a chance to detect and disable the *forcecage* trap. This entails finding and ruining a small glyph in the middle of the floor, requiring a successful Search check and a successful Disable Device check, respectively. The trap cannot be detected or disabled when the *forcecage* is active.

Forcecage **Trap:** CR 7; creatures within the room are trapped for up to 12 hours in a barred *forcecage* (described on page 207 of the *Player's Handbook*), no save allowed; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 30).

Tactics: Watching the PCs through the western arrow slit, the mephits in area **26** wait until most or all of the PCs enter this room. One mephit pulls the lever in area **26** to activate the *forcecage* trap. The others take turns using their frigid breath weapons on the imprisoned PCs. The ice paraelemental uses its *chill metal* effect. Meanwhile, the ettin leaves its lair (using the secret passage in area **27**) and gathers reinforcements from the Upper Level.

Development: If the ettin succeeds in slipping away and gathering reinforcements (see **Tactics** above), it returns after 1d4+6 minutes, instructs the mephits in area **26** to deactivate the *forcecage*, and attacks PCs with the aid of its newfound allies: Samakel (area **55**), his two lieutenants (area **54**), and two ice golems (area **42**).

WE'RE BEING WATCHED

The PCs come under the curious gaze of Helios, and perhaps Acessiwal, the moment that their presence is revealed within Coldheart—or perhaps before, depending on how much noise they made getting in. The PCs can reveal themselves through loud combats, failure to silence shouting defenders, setting off *alarm* spells, or by allowing a dungeon denizen to run off and warn others. Refer to the *scrying* spell in the *Player's Handbook* (page 247) for rules on successful use and detection.

Helios wastes no time using his *crystal ball*. From that point on, he watches the PCs' every movement. At first, Helios is likely to watch or perhaps dispatch a few ice golems from his lab (area **43**). He might convince Guuzab, the hezrou (area **47**) to engage the PCs in an effort to win Acessiwal's favor. Ultimately, he waits for a moment when the PCs appear weak before launching his own attack.

At first, the PCs can benefit from the arrogance of the dragon and its servants. The PCs should be thankful that their foes do not immediately unite to crush them. Still, the longer the PCs remain within Coldheart, the more likely that Acessiwal calls out every ice golem, mephit, and ally to dispatch its foes. If he appears pressed, Acessiwal takes the final measure of sealing a pact with Guuzab and Akasa (area **47**) to gain their help and the help of whatever tanar'ri they can summon.

Counterscrying

The PCs, seeking to learn about their enemy, might use scrying spells or devices to gain some intelligence.

Helios and Acessiwal are almost guaranteed to notice the sensor. Helios's reaction is to laugh, thank the heroes for alerting him to their presence and strengths, and cast a *nondetection* spell from a scroll. Acessiwal, in turn, either *dispels* the *scrying* spell or follows Helios' example. If that fails, he calls on Helios to cast a *screen*, all the while threatening the PCs will fatal consequences for their audacity.

Should any of the other inhabitants of Coldheart sense that they are being watched, they inform Acessiwal as quickly as possible. The dragon then sends his forces after the PCs in waves to test their mettle.

Ad Hoc Experience Adjustment: If the PCs overcome this level's defenders together here, calculate it as a single EL 15 encounter (higher if the ettin gathers forces from above).

26. Mephits' Room. This room is home to the ice mephits that serve Acessiwal. Some fifty or so ice mephits answer to the dragon's call, though only twenty are here at any given time. In addition, the ice mephits have convinced an ice paraelemental to visit for a time and see how great things are in this corner of the multiverse.

> The walls of this 20-foot-high chamber are coated with thick curtains of ice, in some places forming shelves or perches. Two spires of crudely worked ice rise up from the floor.

The southernmost spire of ice is actually an elder ice paraelemental. Perched on the paraelemental and various other icy surfaces are twenty ice mephits.

The floor here is slippery, and PCs who engage in battle or take more than a standard move must succeed at a Dexterity check (DC 10) or fall prone.

Creatures (EL 13): The ice mephits are playful, capricious, and loathe to risk their tiny existence. As long as they have the ice paraelemental, or as long as they outnumber the PCs 3-to-1, they seem brave enough.

Ice Mephits (20): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual*, page 132.

Elder Ice Paraelemental (1): hp 204; see the end of the adventure for complete statistics.

Treasure: Their own raids and some meager generosity from their lord have provided the mephits with a collection of gems—mostly diamonds worth a total of 8,000 gp. The gems are scattered about the floor in four little piles.

27. Ettin's Room. A nameless and cruel ettin barbarian lives here, charged with guarding the main entrance to Coldheart. The room holds an oversized, broken-down bed and a large wooden chair. A cabinet with its doors torn off stands against the south wall; it contains slabs of cold meat.

The secret door in the northeast corner is carefully hidden, requiring a Search check (DC 35) to find. A short tunnel connects to the southern corridor (area **24**).

Creature (EL 10): The ettin is a selfish, despicable creature that spends most of its existence tormenting ice mephits.

Ettin Bbn5 (1): CR 10; Large Giant (14 feet tall); HD 10d8+30 (ettin) plus 5d12+15 (Bbn); hp 146; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft.; AC 18 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +7 natural, +3 hide armor); Atk +23/+18 melee* (1d10+11, *maul of the titans*), +20/+15 melee* (1d10+8, greatclub); Reach 10 ft.; SA superior two-weapon fighting (see *Player's Handbook*, page 89), rage 2/day; SQ uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, cannot be flanked), darkvision 90 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +15*, Ref +4*, Will +5*; Str 27 (23 without magic *belt*), Dex 8, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 11.

*Includes +1 competence bonus for *ioun stone*.

Skills: Listen +15, Search +0, Spot +15. *Feats:* Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Sunder.

Possessions: Hide armor, *maul of the titans*, greatclub, *+4 belt of giant strength, helm of teleportation,* iridescent spindle *ioun stone* (sustains without air), pale green prism *ioun stone* (+1 competence bonus to attacks, saves, and checks), *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Lower Level (Areas 28–41)

No one important to the hierarchy of Coldheart lives on this level. However, the ice and gem mines on this level are critical to Acessiwal's domination of the region. If the PCs are truly overmatched by the dragon itself, creating some mayhem here is a reasonable strategy.

Most of the encounters here represent little tactical challenge for the PCs. The danger here is to become delayed while defenders above marshal and prepare. The benefit lies in some monetary treasures and the chance to free some prisoners.

Unless the PCs have incurred the ire of the dragon's more powerful servants, roll 1d100 once every hour to determine random encounters.

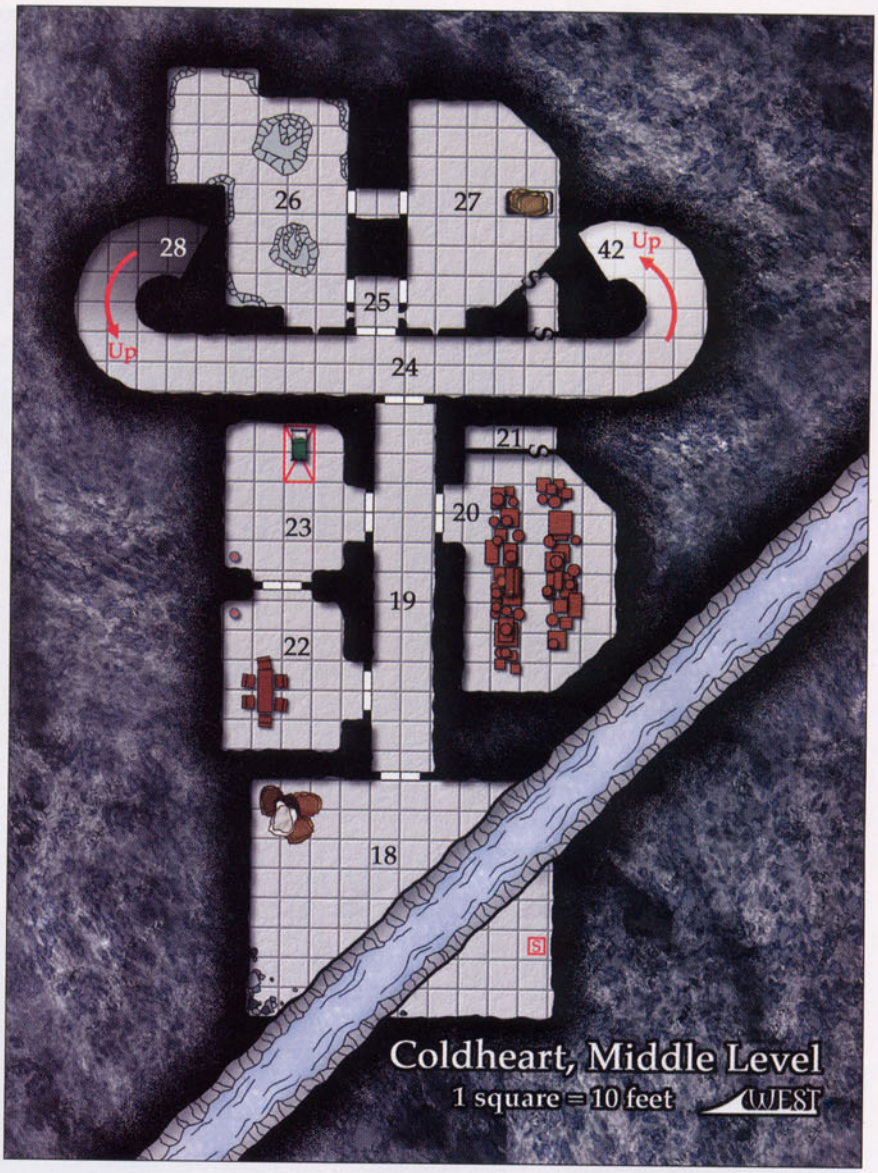
01-75: No encounter.

76-85: Necterm the Overseer, from area 35.

86-90: Ogre icecutter from area 29.

91-95: Human miner from area 41.

96-00: Use the random encounter table for the Middle Level, re-rolling "No encounter" results.



28. Shipping and Receiving.

A pair of cabinets stand against the roughly hewn north and south walls, while a sturdy table made of iron and reinforced wood occupies the room's center. A skeletal statue carved from solid ice stands between two heavy wooden carts against the west wall.

The carts are used to transport ice, gems, or valuables to the levels above. The north cabinet contains three heavy picks and three winter outfits (furs, cloaks, and gloves) designed to protect miners from the ice and cold. The south cabinet is currently empty.

Workers on this level who do not possess darkvision carry lanterns, as the entire level is unlit.

Creature (EL 13): The ice golem here is under orders to push carts to the Upper Level when so ordered by Necterm the Overseer. Unlike most ice golems, this one has no orders to attack. If attacked, the golem defends itself normally.

Ice Golem (1): hp 99; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: Embedded in the golem's icy body are 10d10 gems, each worth 100 gp.

29. Ice Bed. This icepack is the current source of the ice used to create ice golems.

The clank of metal rings out. Six ogres armed with heavy picks are breaking away chunks of ice beneath them. Axes and saws lie discarded nearby. Near them, on an 8-foot-long cart, rests a large block of ice.

This pure sheet of ice is ideal for creating ice golems. The ogres crack great blocks of ice, place them on a cart, and push the cart to area 30 (the carving room).

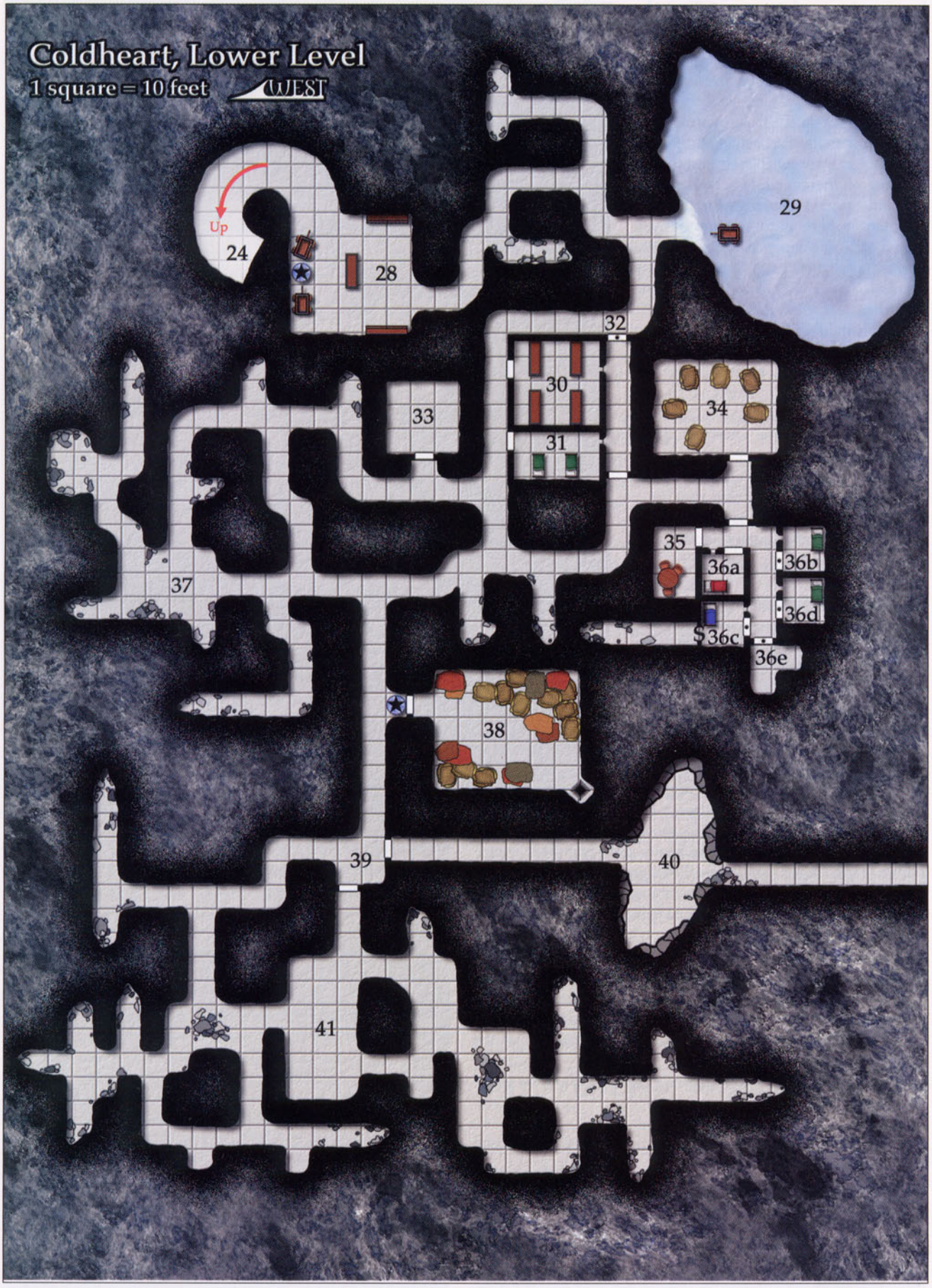
Creatures (EL 7): Overpaid unskilled labor at its finest, the ogres are relatively happy with their lot.

Ogres (6): hp 26 each; *Monster Manual*, page 144.

Tactics: The ogres scream and yell if attacked, bringing Necterm (see area 35) in 1d4 rounds. If the PCs leave the ogres alone, the ogres assume they are servants or inspectors sent by Helios (see **Development** below) and ignore them.

Development: The ogres obey Necterm the Overseer, who in turn takes orders from a wizard named Helios (whom the ogres have never seen). PCs who succeed at a Bluff check (opposed by the ogres' untrained Sense Motive check) can fool the ogres into thinking they are high-ranking servants of the wizard. Give the ogres a +5 bonus to the Sense Motive check if a PC claims to be Helios himself.

30. Carving Room. Here, great blocks of ice from area 29 are sculpted into ice golems (which Helios can then animate). The prisoners here can sculpt an ice golem in two days.


Coldheart, Lower Level
1 square = 10 feet
WEST
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40
41

Four sturdy iron tables stand in the room. Three of them support large ice blocks. Two of the blocks are unworked, while the third is a work in progress: out of the block of ice, a pair of legs extend from one end, while a head and shoulders jut from the other.

A murder hole in the east wall allows Necterm the Overseer to spy on the ice carvers (see **Creatures** below) while they work. The carvers are aware of the hole and its purpose.

Creatures (EL –): Two humans, Agle and Kline, work here. Both were artists living in Latona before they were captured and brought here. Any offer to free them is happily accepted. When the PCs enter the room, Kline is busy sculpting the ice golem's feet while Agle crafts the shoulders and neck. Both are wearing heavy winter clothes and gloves.

Agle, Female Human Exp4: hp 14; Craft (sculpting) +9.

Kline, Male Human Exp3: hp 10; Craft (sculpting) +7.

Treasure: Four sets of masterwork artisan's tools can be found in the room, strewn about on tables.

Development: In exchange for their rescue and freedom, Agle and Kline can provide a rough map of the Lower Level, describing accurately what each chamber contains. They don't know what lies beyond the door in area **38**, but they know that a dozen or more prisoners can be found mining in area **41**.

31. Ice Carvers' Quarters. Agle and Kline reside here. Two fur-covered beds provide comfort when they're not working. A murder hole in the east wall allows Necterm the Overseer (see area **35**) to keep tabs on the ice carvers.

32. Locked Door. Neither the ogres (area **29**) nor the ice carvers (area **30**) are allowed beyond this point without Necterm's permission. A lock has been attached to the door, requiring a successful Open Lock check (DC 25) to bypass.

33. Storage. This 30-foot-square room contains picks, mining tools, broken-down carts, and old wooden beams (used to shore up mining tunnels). There is nothing of value here.

34. Ogres' Quarters. Eighteen ogres inhabit Coldheart. Six are carving ice blocks in area **29**, six are overseeing the human miners in area **41**, and six are resting here.

Creatures (EL 7): As with area **29**, the six ogres here can be bluffed into thinking the PCs belong here, especially if they come in and begin issuing orders.

Ogres (6): hp 26 each; *Monster Manual*, page 144.

Treasure: The ogres have collected 1,250 gp in pay over the past few months. In addition, three ogres have hidden a sack of uncut diamonds (worth a total of 3,500 gp) among the smelly furs.

Development: Sounds of battle in this area bring Necterm the Overseer (area **35**) in 1d3 rounds.

35. Overseer's Office.

A table surrounded by three chairs stands in one corner of this cold, rectangular room. A set of chains and manacles are attached to the wall opposite the door.

Unless she is drawn elsewhere, Necterm the Overseer is here. Acessiwal rewards her handsomely for the relatively simple chore of keeping the ogres and prisoners in line.

Creature (EL 17): Necterm has little knowledge of icecutting or diamond mining and relies on the slaves and ogres to keep things running. A mercenary, Necterm is proud to serve the dragon, though she dislikes serving under Helios. (She also distrusts wizards and magic in general.) She resents being left to the menial task of watching slaves and wants Helios to entrust her with more important tasks and responsibilities.

Necterm is a hulking half-orc woman. Her reddish-brown skin is covered with black tattoos depicting various sacred animal totems. Her hideous sneer is hidden behind a *mask of the skull,* which adds to her fearsome appearance. In battle, she wields a *+3 orc double axe.* Her *mantle of spell resistance* affords her some magical protection.

Necterm, Female Half-orc Bbn17: CR 17; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 17d12+51; hp 191; Init +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft. (40 ft. without *breastplate*); AC 16 (-1 Dex, +7 *+2 breastplate*); Atk +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+8 [×2]/crit ×3, *+3 orc double axe* with Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Weapon Focus feats); SA greater rage 4/day; SQ uncanny dodge (can't be flanked, +2 against traps), damage reduction 2/–, SR 21; AL CN; SV Fort +14, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 8, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 15.

Skills: Climb +12*, Intimidate +14, Jump +14*, Listen +13, Spot +8, Swim +19, Wilderness Lore +9. *Feats:* Ambidexterity, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (orc double axe), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (orc double axe).

*Includes -3 armor check penalty for the *+2 breastplate.*

Possessions: +2 breastplate, +3 orc double axe, mask of the skull, mantle of spell resistance (SR 21), three *potions of cure light wounds,* pouch of uncut diamonds worth 2,500 gp (quadruple value if cut by an expert), keys to doors in area **36**.

Tactics: Necterm does her best to fight the PCs in a doorway or wherever she can neutralize the advantage of their superior numbers. She looses her *mask of the skull* at the most powerful foe and calls the ogres to her aid if any of them remain alive.

36. Prison. This area contains five cells for housing prisoners and malcontents. The outer walls (the ones facing the hall and the other cells) are made of 4-inch-thick iron, and the doors are of similar material and thickness. Necterm carries the keys to these doors.

Iron Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 120; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 28).

Murder holes in the wall allow anyone in the adjoining hall to peer into the cells.

36a. Overseer's Bedchamber. This cell serves as Necterm's bedchamber. A fur-heaped bed rests against the south wall.

36b. Urtruk's Cell. Urtruk, a, frost giant, is imprisoned here.

Creature (EL 7): Captured by Acessiwal months ago, the despairing giant is seldom let free of his cell, and Necterm routinely beats him. If the door to his cell opens, Urtruk hides in the corner, fearing that Necterm has returned to inflict more punishment. He fights only if attacked. If healed and armed, he agrees to fight alongside the PCs—at least until an opportunity of escape makes itself clear.

Urtruk, Male Frost Giant: hp 133 (currently 25); *Monster Manual*, page 98.

36c. Bad Ogre! This cell contains Brognak, an ogre who likes to bully the other ogres when Necterm isn't around. He has been locked in here for the past several days as punishment for his poor behavior and work ethic.

A secret tunnel stretches westward—the project of one of the cell's former tenants. The tunnel doesn't extend far, suggesting that the prisoner never escaped. Finding the secret tunnel requires a successful Search check (DC 20).

Creatures (EL 2): Brognak is unarmed. If the door to his cell is opened by anyone other than Necterm, he charges forth and bull-rushes anyone standing in the doorway. Once free of his cell, he flees to the nearest cache of weapons and arms himself (the heavy picks stored in area **28** should suffice).

Ogre (1): hp 31; *Monster Manual*, page 144.

36d. Harmless Prisoner. The cell contains Barlo, a human peasant (Com1; hp 3, currently 1) who fell sick in the mines. His failure to work landed him here, where he's likely to die unless freed.

36e. Unoccupied Cell. There is nothing of interest here.

37. Abandoned Mine. This diamond mine played itself out years ago and has long since been abandoned.

38. Miners' Quarters. An ice golem stands outside the door to this chamber (see **Creature** below).

Inside, the chamber is a foul mess. Furs are strewn about haphazardly, and the room smells of sweat. A hole has been dug into the southeast corner and serves as a midden pit.

During most of the day, the miners can be found in area **41**. One-third of the day, they can be found resting here.

Creature (EL 13): The ice golem's orders are to attack anyone who comes out of the room unaccompanied by an ogre. The golem also defends itself if attacked.

Ice Golem (1): hp 99; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: Embedded in the golem's icy body are 10d10 gems, each worth 100 gp.

Development: Sounds of combat here bring the five ogres from area **39** in 1 round. Necterm the Overseer (if still alive) arrives in 1d4+1 rounds.

39. Guard Room. This room has ice doors opening to the south and east. The room contains both **Creatures** and **Treasure**. The stretch of corridor to the west contains piles of mining equipment such as picks, shovels, and carts.

Creatures (EL 7): Five ogres stand watch here, opening the south door every few hours to give a sparing supply of water and food to the slaves who labor in the mine beyond. In turn, the ogres collect the rough diamonds for shipment to the Upper Level.

Ogres (5): hp 26 each; *Monster Manual*, page 144.

Treasure: At any given moment, 3,000 gp worth of uncut diamonds can be found here.

40. Cave of Icicles. The tunnel leading from area **39** descends eastward at a 15-degree angle. After 100 feet, it breaks into a natural, oblong cave before continuing its descent into the Underdark. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs peer into the cavern:

> The tunnel descends for 100 feet before breaking into a cave with rough, ice-glazed walls. The floor drops down 10 feet, and the 30-foot-high ceiling is lined with sharp icicles. The tunnel continues east from the floor of the cave, plunging into darkness.

The east tunnel continues away from Coldheart. If you wish, the tunnel might lead to the Underdark or to some remote outpost deeper within the glacier. If you have no wish to expand this adventure, the tunnel can simply collapse after a few hundred feet.

Creature (EL 7): A pile of broken ice near the mouth of the eastern cave conceals a white pudding (an arctic variant of the black pudding). The pudding seeps forth through cracks in the rubble and attacks the nearest warm-blooded creature.

White Pudding (1): hp 132; *Monster Manual*, page 145 (black pudding, variant).

41. Diamond Mine. The mine is a chaotic maze of roughly hewn tunnels, curving arches, and vertical pits and chutes. The clank of metal on stone, the chatter of the miners, and the trod of feet fill the space.

Creatures (EL —): Twenty-three prisoners (Com1-Com4; hp 1d4/level) labor here as diamond miners. Some were captured a few weeks ago, while others have been prisoners for years.

Development: The miners are no help in a fight, and they beg the PCs to help them escape to their homes and families.

Upper Level (Areas 42–57)

The nobility of Coldheart reside on this level, taking pleasure in an easy existence. Indeed, it could be the internal politicking, petty squabbling, and currying of favor among Coldheart's lords that have slowed the growth of the dragon's power.

Each of the major NPCs here is presented in the area he, she, or it spends the most time. However, the PCs chances of encountering them each singly in this manner are remote. If the party has been detected by Helios or the dragon, an ambush might be staged in area **42**. The sounds of combat on this level could draw foes from neighboring rooms until everyone except the dragon above is involved.

This level is full of activity, as its denizens pay visits to one another and discuss future plans of conquest. Roll 1d100 once every hour to determine random encounters.

01-40: No encounter.
41-50: 1 ice golem from area **42**.
51-60: Samakel the half-dragon (area **55**).
61-70: Samakel's lieutenants (roll d%): Wejel (01-30), Jorman (31-60), or both (61-00) from area **54**.
71-80: Akasa the succubus (area **47**).
81-85: Guuzab the hezrou (area **47**).
86-90: Helios the wizard (area **43**).
91-95: Dommeruth the gemcutter (area **45**).
96-00: Acessiwal (area **58**), *polymorphed* into a white-haired, blue-eyed man in black robes. There is a 50% chance that the dragon is accompanied by Samakel (area **55**).

42. Upper Receiving Area. This room is the receiving room for the diamonds and carved ice statues—soon to be ice golems—delivered from the Lower Level. The room also serves as a meeting place where the dungeon's elite summon Necterm, the ettin (area **27**), or ice mephits (area **26**) for various errands.

The room contains two carts, a long iron table covered with scratches and marks, the **Trap**, and the **Creatures**.

Trap (EL 1): An *alarm* spell has been placed on the room by Helios. Anyone who enters without saying the word "Icelord" triggers a piercing shriek that causes the **Creatures** to attack.

Alarm **Trap:** CR 1; triggers audible alarm; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 26).

Creatures (EL 15): Two ice golems standing against the west wall attack anyone in the room when the *alarm* sounds.

Ice Golems (2): hp 99; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: Embedded in each golem are 10d10 gems, each worth 100 gp.

Development: If the *alarm* sounds, Samakel (area **55**) and his two lieutenants (area **54**) charge in, arriving at the eastern door in 3 rounds. They don't open the door until the sounds of combat have ceased. Helios, who's in area **43** if the PCs reach this point without being detected, orders the four ice golems in area **43** to join in the battle before *dimension dooring* to his redoubt (area **44**) and casting defensive spells.

43. Laboratory. Helios' laboratory is stocked with various tools needed to research or construct common magic items or empower most wizard spells. Four tables stand in the center of the room. On each rests a sculpted ice statue—a golem-to-be. Four fully operational ice golems stand in the room, ready to receive orders. The tables along the south wall are covered with alchemical apparati, spell components, and artisan's tools.

If the PCs manage to reach the Upper Level without drawing attention to themselves or falling victim to scrying, Helios first becomes aware of the PCs' invasion as they enter area **42** (assuming they activate or attack the ice golems there). In that case, he orders the ice golems in this chamber to attack and casts *dimension doors* to reach area **44**. From there, he prepares for battle and watches the party through his *crystal ball*.

Creatures (EL 17): The four operational golems obey Helios' every command.

Ice Golems (4): hp 99; complete statistics are listed at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: Embedded in each golem are 10d10 gems, each worth 100 gp. The alchemical equipment on the tables could fetch up to 10,000 gp, provided an interested buyer is found and the equipment can be transported safely.

44. Wizard's Redoubt. There is no corridor or access to this room from the rest of Coldheart. Helios constructed it with the help of an earth elemental, and only Acessiwal knows of the secret chamber's existence. Helios reaches the room through *dimension door* and *teleport* spells.

A *permanent alarm* spell has been placed in the room, and only Helios knows the password ("Runesack"). The *alarm* is of the silent, mental sort, alerting Helios immediately when someone enters the chamber.

Standing on the middle of the 40-foot-square room is an amethyst pedestal carved to resemble a coiled purple worm with a bright crystal orb clutched in its toothy maw. The room's other furnishings include a modest bed, a wooden chest reinforced with iron, a silver brazier that issues wisps of steam, and a desk with a matching chair.

The amethyst purple worm pedestal, crystal orb, and silver brazier are described under **Treasure** #1 below. The chest is rigged with a **Trap** and contains **Treasure** #2.

Lying under the bed, still and invisible, is a perfect replica of Helios. This is his *clone*—the ultimate life insurance policy (although Helios loses a level plus whatever equipment he had on his person should he be brought back to life in this manner).

Creature (EL 16): PCs are unlikely to encounter Helios here unless they scry his location; however, his statistics are listed here for convenience.

Helios, Male Human Wiz16: CR 16; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 16d4+32; hp 76; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, *+5 bracers of armor*); Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); SA spells; SQ permanent spells (see below); AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +21, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +6, Sense Motive +5, Scry +21, Search +6, Spellcraft + 26, Spot +6. *Feats:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Forge Ring, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll.

SQ—Permanent Spells: Helios has cast *permanency* in conjunction with the following spells on his person: *comprehend languages, darkvision, see invisibility,* and *tongues.*

Spells Prepared (4/6/6/5/5/5/4/3/2): 0—*arcane mark, daze, detect magic* (×2); 1st—*alarm, charm person, mage armor, magic missile* (×2), *shield;* 2nd—*cat's grace, detect thoughts, flaming sphere, fog cloud, locate object, mirror image, whispering wind;* 3rd—*dimension door* (×2), *fireball, haste, protection from elements;* 4th—*Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer, improved invisibility, minor globe of invulnerability, stoneskin;* 5th—*cone of cold, persistent image,* quickened *magic missile, teleport, wall of force;* 6th—*chain lightning,* maximized *fireball, geas/quest, Otiluke's freezing sphere;* 7th—*delayed blast fireball, finger of death, limited wish;* 8th—*polymorph any object, summon monster VIII.*

DEALING WITH HELIOS

Helios serves the dragon for his own interests, and he won't sacrifice his life for Acessiwal. Indeed, ultimately Acessiwal is an obstacle in Helios' own plans for domination, and it's only a matter of time before Helios accumulates the wizardry and constructs the army he needs to slay the dragon—or so he believes.

When the PCs invade, Helios sends his ice golem minions after them and watches events unfold through his *crystal ball.* Should he see a sign of weakness, he strikes down on the PCs with all his power and preparations.

If the PCs overcome everything Helios throws at them, he is willing to meet with them and strike a deal: He agrees to "step aside" and stay out of the fight, and the PCs agree to give him his choice of a single item from the dragon's hoard (he wants the *robe of the archmagi*). He also gives them the *talisman of white rage* he constructed in area **44**. Helios will not fight Acessiwal directly unless magically compelled. If the PCs refuse his offer, Helios ascends to area **58** to fight at Acessiwal's side—ready, of course, to beat a magical retreat should the dragon fall.

Possessions: +5 bracers of armor, +4 headband of intellect, four scrolls (*screen, prismatic wall, true seeing,* and *summon monster VIII), wand of dispel magic* (16th level; 25 charges remaining), *pearl of power* (5th-level spell).

Trap (EL 0): The iron-reinforced chest in the northwest corner is trapped with a special *teleport* spell. If the trap is not disabled, attempting to open or move the chest causes it to *teleport* to a vault thousands of miles away in a foreign city, where conceivably Helios can retrieve it later.

***Teleport* Trap:** CR 0; see above for effect; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

Treasure #1: The amethyst pedestal carved in the shape of a purple worm is worth 5,000 gp but weighs 450 lbs. Nestled in its mouth is Helios' *crystal ball,* which can be easily removed. The silver brazier is actually a brazier of warmth (described in area **22**).

Treasure #2: The chest contains 500 pp, 500 gp, three scrolls of *dimension door,* one scroll of *teleport without error,* four *potions of cure serious wounds,* a *necklace of missiles* (one type VII missile remaining), a *golembane scarab* (any), the *talisman of white rage* (see below), and Helios' spellbook.

Helios' spellbook contains all 0-level wizard spells plus the following:

1st—*alarm, charm person, enlarge, hold portal, mage armor, magic missile, mount, shield, unseen servant;*

2nd—*blur, bull's strength, cat's grace, daylight, detect thoughts, endurance, fog cloud, locate object, mirror image, web, whispering wind;*

3rd—*dimension door, dispel magic, fireball, fly, lightning bolt, haste, protection from elements, suggestion, summon monster III;*

4th—*Evard's black tentacles, phantasmal killer, improved invisibility, minor globe of invulnerability, polymorph other, scrying, stoneskin;*

5th—*cloudkill, cone of cold, contact other plane, dream, permanency, persistent image, stone shape, teleport, wall of force;*

6th—*chain lightning, disintegrate, geas/quest, otiluke's freezing sphere, summon monster VI, true seeing, veil;*

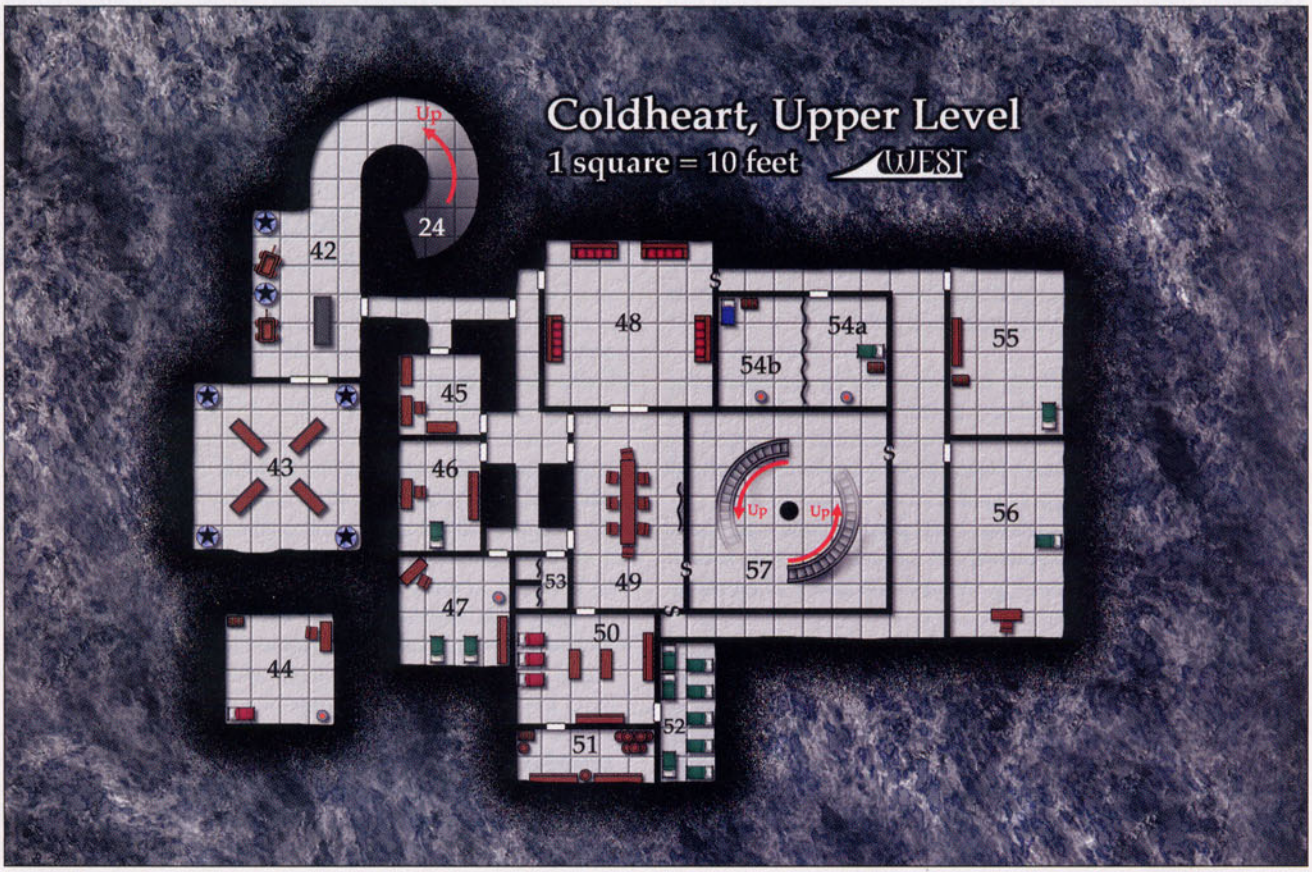
7th—*delayed blast fireball, finger of death, limited wish, Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion, power word, stun;*

8th—*clone, polymorph any object, prismatic wall, screen, summon monster VIII.*

Talisman of White Rage: This item has the single effect of triggering an unquenchable rage in a white dragon. A drop of the dragon's blood sprinkled on the *talisman* activates it. Assume that any successful piercing or slashing attack made by the wearer against the dragon splashes sufficient blood to activate the *talisman.*

The instant its blood touches the *talisman,* the white dragon becomes enraged. It gains a +2 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution scores, a +1 bonus on Will saves, and a -1 penalty to AC. The dragon becomes immune to *fear.* The dragon is compelled to fight, heedless of danger, until the wearer of the *talisman* is slain. It can choose whatever attack forms, spells, and abilities it desires but cannot leave combat. These effects last 15 rounds. No save is allowed against the effect. Spell resistance, if any, applies. The item makes a level check as a 15th-level wizard. If the *talisman* switches hands, more blood must be applied and a new spell resistance roll made (if applicable), but the effects on the dragon do not cease.

The blood that activates the *talisman* must come from the same white dragon it is intended to effect—or from any of its



descendants (dragon or half-dragon). The *talisman* can also be used against half-dragons spawned by a white dragon.

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *antipathy; Market Price:* 40,000 gp; Weight: —.

45. Gemcutter's Workshop.

This room is lit by three lanterns hanging from hooks along the west wall. Two wooden tables stand beneath the lanterns, and a third table stands by itself against the south wall. All three tables are covered with glittering shards and small piles of clear, cut gems. A circular glass lens is attached to the middle table by a delicate silver armature.

Other furnishings include a simple chair, a fur-covered cot tucked under the northernmost table, and an iron trunk under the southernmost table.

Dommeruth, a talented jeweler, was snatched from Latona six months ago while visiting his brother in the city. To avoid imprisonment in the mines, he offered his services to Samakel, agreeing to cut diamonds into sparkling gems fit for a king—or a dragon. In exchange, he receives better food and comfortable accommodations.

The jeweler's cot is unremarkable, and the trunk contains extra furs and basic amenities (comb, soap, candles, tinderbox, flasks of oil to refill the lanterns, spare clothes, and so forth).

The **Treasure** is heaped atop the tables.

Creature (EL 4): Dommeruth (Male Human Exp5; hp 20; Craft [gemcutting] +10) is a craven fellow who has seen too many people die in the mines to worry about the morality of helping the dragon. He avoids the terrifying overlords who inhabit this level, spending most of his time in this chamber.

If the PCs enter and make their purpose clear, Dommeruth begs their assistance in winning his freedom, filling his pockets with the finished diamonds on the tables (see **Treasure** below).

Treasure: The tables contain 3,000 gp worth of uncut diamonds and 11,000 gp worth of finished ones.

46. Empty Guest Quarters. These quarters provide a comfortable place to rest. The room is currently unoccupied.

Development: A PC, through some clever trick or stratagem, might be invited inside Coldheart. (See "Clever Tricks" for details.) Until Acessiwal deigns to grant the PC an audience, however, the character is confined to this room with a golem from area **43** assigned to "protect" her.

47. Occupied Guest Quarters. Not all those who guest here are properly called servants of the dragon.

This chamber currently hosts Guuzab and Akasa. Guuzab is a hezrou sent by his demonic master to assess the value of forging an alliance with Acessiwal. Akasa, meanwhile, is the consort of Guuzab's master—a nameless prince of the abyss—and among the most powerful succubi in existence.

Creatures (EL 14 for Guuzab, 12 for Akasa, 20 if both demons are encountered together): Guuzab spends most of his time lounging here, roaming the corridors, or discussing issues with the dragon. Wherever he is encountered, Guuzab recognizes do-gooder adventurers at a glance. He raises an alarm to summon nearby defenders and attacks.

Akasa spends less time here, as she cares little for Guuzab. Instead she can be found about in the halls or, often, with Samakel in area **55**. Akasa, when encountered alone, plays the role of poor, enslaved servant girl. She hopes to learn more about the PCs, but ultimately she turns against them when the time seems right. If her true nature is revealed, she offers to cut a deal, promising to reveal information about the dragon's lair and its occupants in exchange for a kiss (energy drain) or a major magic item.

Guuzab (Hezrou): hp 67; *Monster Manual*, page 42.

Akasa (Advanced Succubus): CR 12; Medium-Size Outsider (5 ft. tall); HD 12d8+12; hp 72; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (average); AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 natural); Atk +13 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA spell-like abilities, energy drain, summon tanar'ri; SQ damage reduction 20/+2; alternate form; *tongues;* poison and electricity immunity; cold, fire, and acid resistance 20; telepathy; darkvision 60 ft.; SR 24; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 22.

Skills: Bluff +20, Concentration +10, Disguise +15, Diplomacy +18; Escape Artist +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +20, Listen +21, Move Silently +10, Ride +8, Search +12, Sense Motive +9, Spot +23. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility, Expertise.

Spell-Like Abilities: Cast as Sor12, at will: *charm monster, clairaudience/clairvoyance, darkness, desecrate, detect good, detect thoughts, doom, ethereal jaunt* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only), *suggestion, teleport without error* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only); 1/day: *unholy blight.*

Possessions: Ring of X-ray vision.

48. Lounge.

Against the walls of this dark and spacious room stand four padded benches. A 30-foot-diameter, carved circular mural depicting five white dragons spiralling inward adorns the ceiling. Directly under this mural, set into the middle of the floor, is a pentagonal stone. A set of double doors carved from glacial ice dominates the south wall.

Acessiwal has little sense of human comforts; his idea of a lounge was this large open chamber with modest furnishings.

Stepping on the pentagonal stone in the middle of the floor opens the double doors to the south, enabling one to make a dramatic entrance into the dining hall (area **49**). The double doors can also be pulled open normally.

The secret door on the east wall has seen much use. A successful Search check (DC 15) locates it.

TALISMAN OF WHITE RAGE

This magic item, described in area **44**, deserves a bit of explanation. From a game design point of view, the *talisman* exists because most playtests revealed that it is nearly impossible to slay the dragon. Nothing can make the ancient and powerful dragon, which has survived more fights than the PCs ever will, fight against unfavorable—or fair—odds. The *talisman of white rage* gives the PCs a chance to slay the dragon while blunting none of its deadliness.

For the *talisman* to function, however, a quantity of the dragon's blood must be poured over its surface before the item is activated. A slashing or piecing wound to Acessiwal can provide the necessary ingredient. Clever PCs can use a sample of Taigiel's (or even Samakel's) blood instead, since both are Acessiwal's sons.

49. Dining Hall. This cavernous chamber is where the guests and permanent inhabitants of Coldheart take most of their meals. It's a formal setting with only eight chairs surrounding the 25-foot-long table. Servants from area **52** scurry about before, during, and immediately after meals.

The secret doors in this chamber can be found with a successful Search check (DC 15). They swing on well-oiled hinges, barely making a sound when they open.

Treasure: A 15-foot-long, 8-foot-tall tapestry depicting a group of adventurers stumbling upon a white dragon in a vast, icy cavern (as depicted in the illustration on the adjacent page) hangs on the east wall. The tapestry is woven with rich materials and covered in diamond dust. It can be sold for 6,000 gp but weighs 80 lbs.

Development: Should the PCs enter during a meal, they're in for a challenging fight. Normally, Helios sits at north end of the table and Acessiwal, if he decides to attend, at the south (in *polymorphed* form). The east side of the table seats (north to south) Guuzab, Akasa, and Samakel, while the west side seats Wejel, Dommeruth (who almost never attends), and Jorman. Necterm sits in Dommeruth's place infrequently.

50. Kitchen. The kitchen contains a collection of heavy stoves that operate by magic, cabinets with cooking utensils, pots, pans, and the like.

51. Pantry. The pantry contains sufficient food to sustain all of Coldheart's important denizens (save perhaps the dragon) for a month. There are also plenty of leftover scraps for the servants and slaves.

52. Servants' Quarters. Eight servants dwell here, seldom venturing beyond areas **48-53** except when performing some menial task (such as cleaning or washing) in an area beyond.

Creatures (EL –): The eight servants (Male and Female Human Com1; hp 3 each) do whatever they're told and keep silent. They know the layout of the Upper Level, but none of them knows anything about the other levels.

53. Privy. The privies are used by the human servants and by mortal inhabitants of Coldheart. One of the servants from area **52** cleans the privies once a week.

54. Lieutenants' Quarters. Divided by a heavy curtain for privacy, these quarters are shared by Samakel's lieutenants, Wejel and Jorman. A bed and chest furnish each chamber.

Creatures (EL 15): Wejel and Jorman spend most of their time here. Assuming that they haven't been called into a fight, they're either in this room, in Samakel's chamber (area **55**), or out roaming the halls.

Wejel is a slender, pale, nearly hairless man with black, darting eyes and a sharp wit. Over his leather armor he wears loose black furs, which can be cast off quickly before battle.

Jorman is a balding, red-bearded, physically imposing man. A dragon tattoo starts at the back of his neck and slithers down his spine, its wings spread across his broad shoulders. He wears a black fur cape with gray trim and an adamantine breastplate adorned with a horned skull motif.

Comfortable quarters and a chance for leadership in the dragon's army have bound Wejel and Jorman into servitude. They serve Samakel willingly, taking care of issues unworthy of his attention. They deal with the lower level minions whenever it becomes necessary, and they're among the first to rush into battle on this level.

Wejel, Male Human Rog14: CR 14; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 14d6+42; hp 100; Init +6 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+5 Dex, +5 *+3 leather armor, +2 ring of protection*); Atk +19/+14 melee (1d6+4/crit 17-20, *+3 keen short sword* with Weapon Focus and Weapon Finesse feats); SA sneak attack (+7d6), opportunist; SQ uncanny dodge, improved evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +14, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +13, Climb +10, Disable Device +15, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +11, Hide +19, Jump +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +19, Open Lock +14, Pick Pocket +15, Search +10, Spot +10, Swim +9, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +10. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Expertise, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Finesse (short sword).

Possessions: +3 leather armor, +2 ring of protection, +3 keen short sword, potion of gaseous form, potion of spider climb, key to personal chest (see **Treasure** below).

Jorman, Male Human Ftr13: CR 13; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 13d10+39; hp 141; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 25 (+3 Dex, +7 adamantine breastplate, +3 *+1 large steel shield, +2 amulet of natural armor*); Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d8+7/crit 19-20 ×3, *+2 battleaxe* with Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialization feats); AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +11*, Hide +4*, Jump +7*, Listen +5, Ride +11, Spot +4, Swim +11. *Feats:* Cleave, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe), Whirlwind Attack.

*Includes -4 armor check penalty for wearing an adamantine breastplate.

Possessions: Adamantine breastplate, *+1 large steel shield, +2 battleaxe, +2 amulet of natural armor,* three potions of *invisibility*, key to personal chest (see **Treasure** below).

Tactics: Wejel and Jorman have fought together numerous times, preferring to flank a single foe so that Wejel can make sneak attacks.

Treasure: Each lieutenant has a locked chest containing his personal treasure. Jorman's chest contains 2,000 gp in diamonds, 200 gp in coins, an *eversmoking bottle*, and a *carpet of flying* (3 feet by 5 feet). Wejel's chest contains 1,700 gp worth of diamonds, a *figurine of wondrous power* (onyx dog), and *goggles of night*. A *brazier of warmth* (see area **22** for a description) heats each room.

55. Samakel's Chamber.

This room says much about its occupant. The walls are decorated with rich murals depicting scenes of battle and war. The floor is covered with mammoth, bear, and wolf pelts, giving the place a rugged, even primitive look. Meanwhile, an ornate cabinet and trunk look as if they belong in a palace.

Samakel spends most of his time here when not hatching schemes of conquest with Acessiwal. The dragon counts on Samakel to keep order in most instances, and the half-dragon's

loyalty to his father is beyond reproach. Even now, with Akasa distracting him, the "dragon prince" has never lost the good graces of his father. He continues to push for a hasty agenda, eager to mass an army and enslave humanity. Samakel's forcefulness has made him the secret enemy of the wizard Helios, who pushes for a more cautious campaign.

Creature (EL 17): Samakel's statistics are provided below, even though he is as likely to be encountered elsewhere.

Samakel, Male Half-dragon (white)/Half-human Ftr15: CR 17; Medium-Size Humanoid (half-dragon/half-human) (6 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 15d12+45; hp 166; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 30 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +10 *+2 full plate*, +3 *+1 large shield, +2 ring of protection*); Atk +27/+22/+17 melee (1d8+13/crit 15-20 plus one negative level, *Lifetaker* plus Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, and Weapon Specialization feats); SA breath weapon; SQ dragon subtype; immunity to cold, sleep, and paralysis; low-light vision; darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +7 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 27, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Climb +18, Listen +4, Jump +14, Ride +11, Spot +6, Swim +14. *Feats:* Cleave, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Whirlwind Attack.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold, 30 feet, once per day; damage 3d6 points, Reflex save (DC 16) for half damage.

SQ—Immunities: Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

Possessions: +2 full plate, +1 large steel shield, Lifetaker (see **Treasure** below), *cloak of displacement* (major), *+2 ring of protection.*

Tactics: Samakel, while loyal to Acessiwal, is at heart not a brave creature. If he cannot secure assistance in a fight from his minions Wejel and Jorman, Samakel does his best to fight free and dash upstairs (through area **57**) to the dragon's lair. Samakel only ties himself to fights that he knows he can win.

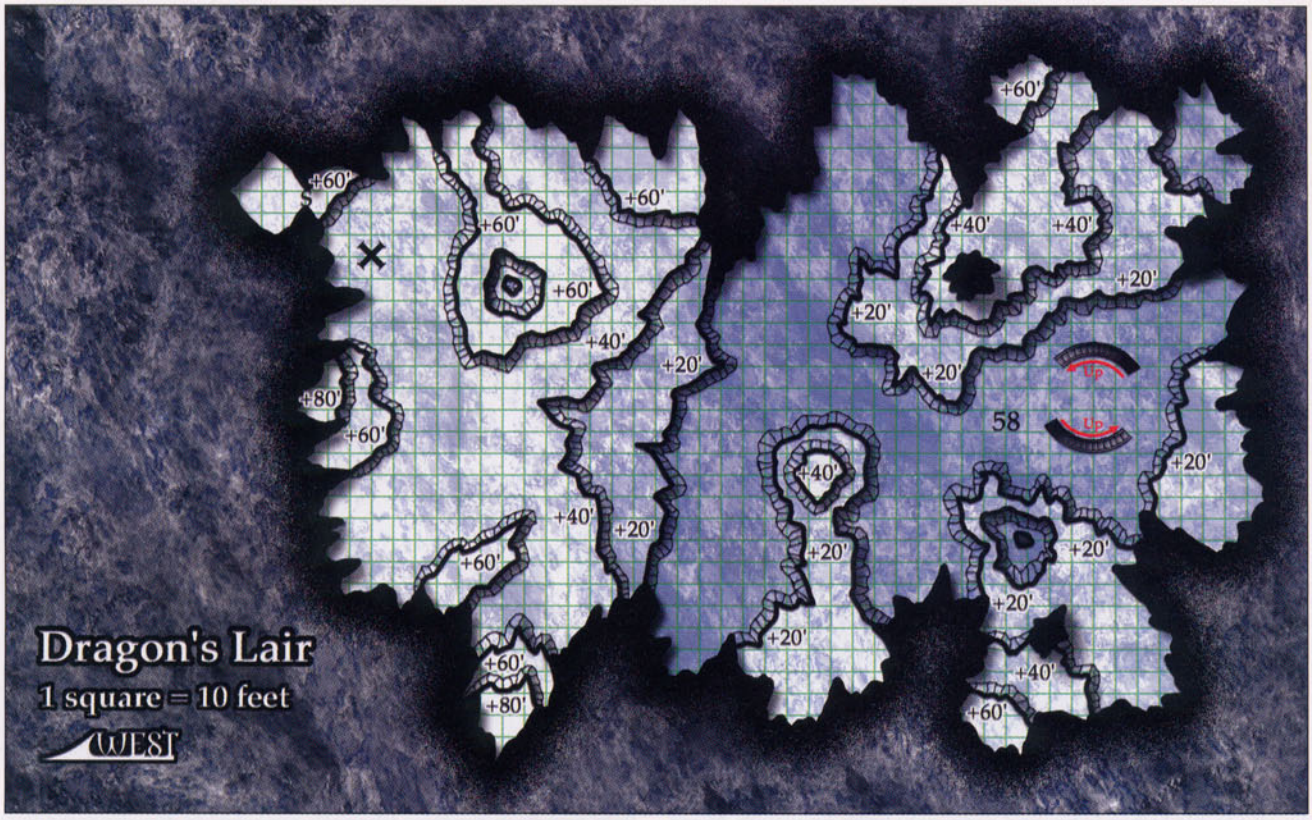
Treasure: In addition to the sword about his belt (described below) and his fur-lined *cloak of displacement*, Samakel keeps a cabinet full of valuables: an embroidered and bejeweled pair of gloves (4,000 gp), a fire opal pendant (1,530 gp), a string of pink pearls (1,000 gp), and a silver-plated scroll case set with a large faceted diamond (3,000 gp). The scroll case is empty.

Lifetaker: This weapon is an intelligent *+3 keen longsword of life stealing* (AL NE; Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16; Ego 17) created in some forgotten pit of the underworld 400 years ago. The sword's creation consumed its insane forger and gave birth to an intelligence that's singular purpose is the consumption of life energies. To that end, *Lifetaker* serves Samakel, but it would be willing to serve any wielder who promises regular "feedings." Like any life-stealing sword, *Lifetaker* bestows one negative level when it deals a critical hit; the sword grants 1d6 temporary hit points to the wielder each time a negative level is bestowed on another. The sword speaks Common, Infernal, and Abyssal. The wielder is also granted evasion (as the rogue ability) and can *see invisibility* at will. Once per day, the sword can *heal* by touch.

Caster Level: cannot be duplicated; *Prerequisites:* —; *Market Price:* 108,000 gp; *Weight:* 4 lb.

56. Helios' Quarters. Helios has chosen to ignore most of this chamber's spacious depth rather than fill it. Other than the bed and desk, the room is nothing but cold walls. The wizard spends little time here. Most of Coldheart's other inhabitants believe that he works in the laboratory (area **43**) at all hours, unaware of his actual hidden bedchamber (area **44**).

Treasure: Tucked in the desk drawer are four heavy purses containing a total of 1,200 gp in coins and 3,000 gp worth of cut diamonds.



57. The Way Up. The secret doors that open into this room can be detected with a successful Search roll (DC 15); they swing open on well-oiled hinges, barely making a sound.

This chamber provides access to the dragon's lair. Fittingly, the means to reach the lair 100 feet above is itself an architectural marvel: a double revolving staircase comprised of two wholly independent staircases that spiral around one another like a helix. *Alarm* spells at the base of each staircase, and at 30 feet and 60 feet above floor level, warn the dragon of approaching intruders (see area **42** for *alarm* trap statistics).

Dragon's Lair (Area 58)

This level of Coldheart, with its single great cavern, lies just beneath the ground of the cliff plateau above. Indeed, only a few feet of ice separate this cavern from the free air above.

58. Acessiwal's Cavern. The cavern measures roughly 450 feet long, 290 feet wide, and 170 feet tall, although its irregular shape and multi-tiered floor make its exact dimensions hard to ascertain. The double-helix staircase (area **57**) rises from the floor at the east end of the lair. The dragon usually rests near its hoard at the west end of the cavern (marked "×").

A vast, icy cavern stretches out before you. Its dark, serrated walls glitter menacingly, and the ceiling overhead soars into darkness. The floor around the double-helix staircase is polished smooth, but in the deeper reaches of the cavern you can see that the smooth floor breaks into multiple tiers, all separated by precarious, jagged walls.

Thick, glacial ice coats every surface, icicles dangle from every overhang, and a cold fog permeates the entire cavern. Occasionally you hear the distant groan or crunch of ice, as if the whole cavern were shifting in its sleep.

The walls cannot be climbed without the aid of climbing gear (pitons, ropes, and grappling hooks) or magic (such as *spider climb* or Acessiwal's icewalking ability). The cavern's many elevations are noted on the above map.

In the northwest corner of the cavern, at the back of a 60-foot-high ledge, a 10-foot-cube block of ice conceals a 30-foot-square cubical chamber. This secret area contains a portion of the dragon's hoard, as noted under **Treasure** below. Finding this "secret door" requires a successful Search check (DC 15). The ice block has 360 hp, takes double damage from magical fire, and requires a successful Strength check (DC 32) to move.

Creature (EL 20): If the PCs somehow manage to surprise Acessiwal, he is sleeping at the base of the northwestern ledge.

Acessiwal, Male Great White Wyrm: CR 20; Gargantuan Dragon (40 ft. long); HD 36d12+288; hp 540; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 60 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy), burrow 30 ft.; AC 41 (-4 size, +35 natural); Atk +45 melee (4d6+13/crit 19-20, bite with Improved Critical feat), +40 melee (2d8+6/crit 19-20, 2 claws with Improved Critical feat), +40 melee (2d6+6, 2 wings), +40 melee (2d8+19, tail slap); Face 20 ft. × 40 ft.; Reach 15 ft.; SA breath weapon, tail sweep, crush, spells, freezing fog, spell-like abilities; SQ frightful presence, immunities, cold subtype, icewalking, damage reduction 20/+3, blindsight 360 ft., darkvision 1,200 ft., SR 27; AL CE; SV Fort +28, Ref +20, Will +24; Str 37, Dex 10, Con 27, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 24 with *headband.*

Skills: Appraise +14, Bluff +26, Concentration +48, Diplomacy +35, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (history) +25, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +44, Scry +33, Search +34, Sense Motive + 24, Spellcraft +44, Spot +44, Wilderness Lore +14. *Feats:* Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Snatch, Spell Penetration, Track.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold; 60 feet long; 12d6 points of damage, Reflex save (DC 36) halves.

SA—Crush: Acessiwal can land on Medium-size or smaller opponents; those who fail a Reflex save (DC 36) take 4d6+19 points of damage and are pinned. Pinned creatures take damage each round if the dragon maintains a grapple.

SA—Tail Sweep: As a standard action, Acessiwal can sweep its tail in a 30-foot-diameter half circle centered on dragon's rear. Creatures of size Small or smaller take 2d6+19 points of damage, or half if a Reflex save (DC 36) succeeds.

SA—Freezing Fog (Sp): Three times per day, Acessiwal can create *solid fog* that also causes a rime of slippery ice, adding the effect of a *grease* spell.

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): 3/day—*gust of wind, fog cloud, wall of ice;* 1/day—*control weather.*

SQ—Frightful Presence (Ex): Creatures within 360 feet are affected unless a Will save (DC 35) succeeds. Creatures with 4 or fewer HD are panicked for 4d6 rounds; creatures with 5 or more HD are shaken for 4d6 rounds. Those who succeed are immune to the fear aura for one day.

SQ—Immunities: Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

SQ—Cold Subtype: Acessiwal is immune to cold and takes double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Spells Known (6/7/7/7/7/6/4, save DC = 17 + spell level, cast as Sor13): 0—*arcane mark, daze, dancing lights, detect magic, flare, light, open/close, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*alarm, mage armor, message, magic missile, obscuring mist;* 2nd—*bull's strength, cat's grace, darkness, endurance, mirror image;* 3rd—*displacement, haste, fireball, protection from elements;* 4th—*fire shield, improved invisibility, minor globe of invulnerability, stoneskin;* 5th—*hold monster, prying eyes, teleport;* 6th—*antimagic field, Tenser's transformation.*

Possessions: Ring of fire resistance (major), *+6 headband of Charisma.*

Tactics: Acessiwal is almost certain to know when the PCs' are coming. Anyone left alive—including ice golems—in the Upper Level should be summoned to the lair with promises of additional rewards for their service. When Acessiwal believes the PCs are 5 rounds from reaching his lair, he casts the following spells (spell durations are noted in parentheses):

Round 1: *haste* (13 rounds), *stoneskin* (130 minutes);

Round 2: *endurance* (13 hours), *mage armor* (13 hours);

Round 3: *cat's grace* (13 hours), *protection from elements* (lightning; 130 minutes);

Round 4: *improved invisibility* (13 minutes), *minor globe of invulnerability* (13 rounds),

Round 5: *displacement* (13 rounds), *Tenser's transformation* (13 rounds).

The dragon initiates combat from surprise if possible, either by flying to attack or by using his icewalking ability. He targets any spellcaster he can identify, spending all of his formidable melee attacks to slay individual targets as fast as possible.

The dragon makes good use of his feats, especially Power Attack. Given the dragon's incredible attack bonus, shaving 10 to 15 points from attack to damage rolls should be routine. Don't neglect the effect of the dragon's reach and his Hover feat (which allows him to use all four claws to make attacks and attacks of opportunity).

If Acessiwal falls victim to a *dispel magic* (a smart tactic for the PCs) or if most of the damage he suffers is magical, the dragon switches tactics by casting *antimagic field.*

HARM: THE BROKEN SPELL

Against large opponents with a plethora of hit points, the 6th-level cleric spell *harm* possesses numerous advantages. The creature's hit points are irrelevant, and its enormity just makes it easier to touch. As DM, it's okay to make a ruling that won't ruin the tension of the climax with the casting of a single spell. Allow the dragon a Will saving throw to negate the spell's effect.

Don't forget that the dragon's major *ring of fire resistance* absorbs the first 30 points of fire damage per round.

Treasure: A pile of treasure at the point marked "✕" contains the dragon's visible hoard. There can be found 8,000 gp, 24,000 gp in cut diamonds, five potions of *bull's strength,* a *robe of the archmagi* (black), and a *medallion of thoughts.*

The secret chamber in the northwest corner of the cavern contains another 40,000 gp worth of cut diamonds, a *periapt of health, rod of wonder* (6 charges remaining), *cube of frost resistance, +2 spiked gauntlet of shocking burst,* and *+2 tome of clear thought.*

Development: Should Acessiwal be reduced to 20% of its hit point total (roughly 100 hp or fewer), it uses its next action to *teleport* away or, if that's not possible, to fly up through the roof of the lair. The collision deals 3d6 points of damage to the dragon (which isn't enough to actually hurt Acessiwal, thanks to his damage reduction) and smashes a hole large enough for Acessiwal to continue flying up and away.

The *talisman of white rage* (see area **44**) can prevent the dragon from fleeing for a time.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Depending on the actions of the PCs, this adventure has several possible conclusions.

FAILURE!

If the heroes fail to slay Acessiwal, yet they survive the experience, they can return to humanity proud and possibly richer. However, they have made a foul enemy. Acessiwal eventually tracks down the PCs and attempts to slay them.

The more terrible scenario could be that Acessiwal eradicates the PCs completely. What then? If you're not above a little *deus ex machina,* the arrogant wizard Helios might decide he needs the PCs' help to overthrow the dragon. Before they die, he secretly begins growing *clones* that rise to consciousness after the originals' deaths.

In either of the above scenarios, the dragon continues to expand his power, recruiting subjects and marshalling an evil army to his side. If not stopped, Acessiwal begins to absorb the closest towns into an empire, reinforcing his rank-and-file troops with a variety of enslaved creatures.

SUCCESS!

If the heroes prevail, the dread threat of Coldheart is broken. Opportunistic villains—including Samakel, Helios, or perhaps some undead incarnation—might take over the site. In the end, the PCs should be justly proud of their victory. Defeating a dragon of Acessiwal's power is something that many others have tried and failed to accomplish. It's the stuff of which legends are born. Ω

Appendix: New Monsters

Ice Golem

Large Construct (Cold)
Hit Dice: 18d10 (99 hp)
Initiative: -1 (Dex)
Speed: 20 ft. (can't run)
AC: 30 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +22 natural)
Attacks: 2 slams +20 melee
Damage: slam 2d10+8
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Berserk
Special Qualities: Construct, immunities, fast healing 6, damage reduction 30/+3, heat vulnerability
Saves: Fort +6, Ref: +5, Will +6
Abilities: Str 27, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any cold land
Organization: Solitary or gang (2-5)
Challenge Rating: 13
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 19-24 HD (Large); 25-50 HD (Huge)

An ice golem resembles a large human skeleton carved out of translucent ice. It has a thin, bony form composed of water that has been frozen hard and long. The golem stands 9 feet tall and weighs 300 pounds. Its arms end in sharp claws capable of rending flesh, and its head is roughly skull-shaped. The golem cannot speak or make any vocal noise.

Combat

Ice golems are wicked foes, striking with cold, silent fury. Even worse, the ice golem is nearly invulnerable, combining all of the typical immunities of a golem with the defenses granted by its frigid origin.

Berserk (Ex): When an ice golem enters combat, there is a cumulative 1% chance each round that its elemental spirit breaks free and goes berserk. The uncontrolled golem goes on a rampage, attacking the nearest living creature or smashing some object smaller than itself if no creature is within reach, then moving on to spread more destruction. Once the golem goes berserk, no known method can reestablish control.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): Ice golems are immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. A fire effect deals damage normally (and might deal double damage—see Cold Subtype below). A cold effect cures 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage it would otherwise deal. For example, a damaged ice golem hit by a *cone of cold* dealing 30 points of cold damage would heal 3 hit points. The ice golem rolls no saving throw against cold effects.

Immunity (Ex): Ice golems take half damage from slashing and piercing weapons.

Cold Subtype: Cold immunity; double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Fast Healing (Ex): In conditions of extreme cold (below 0° F), the ice golem gains fast healing 6.

Heat Vulnerability: An ice golem cannot survive outside of cold weather (above 40° F). Each round that it is exposed to surroundings outside of cold weather, the golem suffers 3d6 points of damage. In addition, the golem is *slowed* (as the spell).

Construction

An ice golem's body is carved from ice that has not melted for at least a century. The ice block used to craft the golem can weigh no less than 650 pounds.

The golem costs 80,000 gp to create, which includes 1,000 gp for the body. Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (sculpting or masonry) check (DC 18). The roll is made after the sculpting is complete, meaning that if the Craft check fails, the block of ice and 1,000 gp are wasted.

The creator must be at least 16th level and able to cast arcane spells. Completing the ritual drains 1,800 XP from the creator and requires *geas/quest, limited wish, polymorph any object,* and *Otiluke's freezing sphere.*

ICE PARAELEMENTAL

	Ice Paraelemental, Small Small Elemental (Cold)	Ice Paraelemental, Medium Medium-Size Elemental (Cold)	Ice Paraelemental, Large Large Elemental (Cold)
Hit Dice:	2d8 (9 hp)	4d8+8 (26 hp)	8d8+24 (60 hp)
Initiative:	+1 (Dex)	+3 (Dex)	+5 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.
AC:	16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)	17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)	19 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +5 natural)
Attacks:	Icicles +3 melee	Icicles +6 melee	Icicles +10/+5 melee
Damage:	Icicle 1d4 and 1d4 cold	Icicle 1d6+1 and 1d6 cold	Icicle 2d6+2 and 2d6 cold
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Chill metal	Chill metal	Chill metal
Special Qualities:	Elemental, cold subtype	Elemental, cold subtype	Elemental, cold subtype, damage reduction 10/+1
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1	Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11	Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11	Str 14, Dex 21, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11
Skills:	Listen +5, Spot +5	Listen +7, Spot +7	Listen +12, Spot +12
Feats:	Combat Reflexes, Weapon Finesse (icicle)	Combat Reflexes, Weapon Finesse (icicle)	Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Weapon Finesse (icicle)

	Ice Paraelemental, Huge Huge Elemental (Cold)	Ice Paraelemental, Greater Huge Elemental (Cold)	Ice Paraelemental, Elder Huge Elemental (Cold)
Hit Dice:	16d8+64 (136 hp)	21d8+84 (178 hp)	24d8+96 (204 hp)
Initiative:	+7 (Dex)	+8 (Dex)	+9 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.
AC:	20 (-2 size, +7 Dex, +5 natural)	25 (-2 size, +8 Dex, +9 natural)	26 (-2 size, +9 Dex, +9 natural)
Attacks:	Icicles +17/+12/+7 melee	Icicles +19/+14/+9 melee	Icicles +23/+18/+13/+8 melee
Damage:	Icicle 2d8+4 and 2d8 cold	Icicle 2d8+5 and 2d8 cold	Icicle 2d8+5 and 2d8 cold
Face/Reach:	10 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.	10 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.	10 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks:	Chill metal	Chill metal	Chill metal
Special Qualities:	Elemental, cold subtype, damage reduction 10/+2	Elemental, cold subtype, damage reduction 10/+2	Elemental, cold subtype, damage reduction 15/+3
Saves:	Fort +9, Ref +17, Will +5	Fort +11, Ref +20, Will +7	Fort +12, Ref +23, Will +8
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 25, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11	Str 20, Dex 27, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11	Str 22, Dex 29, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11
Skills:	Listen +18, Spot +18	Listen +23, Spot +23	Listen +26, Spot +26
Feats:	Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (icicle)	Combat Reflexes, Dodge Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (icicle)	Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse (icicle)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: Small 1; medium 3; large 5; huge 7; greater 9; elder 11
Treasure: None
Alignment: Usually neutral
Advancement: Small 3 HD (Small); Medium 5-7 HD (Medium-size); Large 9-15 HD (Large); Huge 17-20 HD (Huge); Greater 22-23 HD (Huge); Elder 25+ HD (Huge)

An ice paraelemental is a synthesis of two elemental forces—air and water—within a single elemental creature. Because they are composed of two primal forces of nature, they are unpredictable and dangerous. These icy monoliths seek to drape the planes in a curtain of cold. They dwell on the planes of Water and Air, but find neither frigid enough for their tastes.

An ice paraelemental looks like a roughly hewn translucent statue of ice, covered head to toe in sharpened icicles. The glint of reflected light gives the appearance of capricious, winking eyes.

Ice paraelementals speak both Aquan and Auran. Their voices have a serene, tinkling quality at odds with their fearsome appearance.

COMBAT

Ice paraelementals are patient combatants, often waiting for foes to come to them. Larger ice paraelementals might pretend to be flat-footed, hoping to lure opponents within reach of their many attacks of opportunity. In any case, ice paraelementals will move to maximize the number of opponents within the radius of their *chill metal* attack, then outlast the enemy, who will likely be taking damage from their *chilled* weapons and armor.

Chill Metal (Su): The ice paraelemental's *chill metal* power functions exactly like the druid spell of the same name, except it affects everything within the listed radius. Like the spell, it takes 3 rounds for the *chill metal* to reach the freezing stage.

Once it does, it remains at that stage until the ice paraelemental takes a standard action to end the effect, with *chill metal* ending 2 rounds later, just as the spell.

Cold Subtype (Ex): Cold immunity; double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Elemental: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, and stunning. Not subject to critical hits.

MASTODON

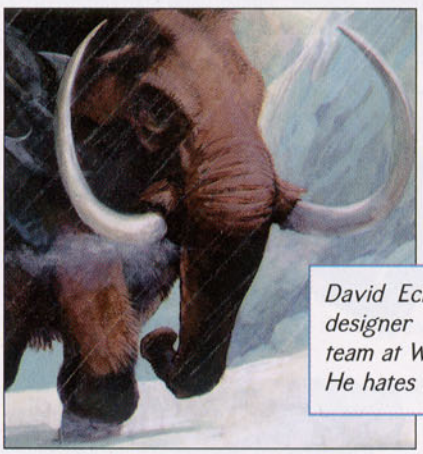
Huge Animal
Hit Dice: 16d8+128 (200 hp)
Initiative: +0 (Dex)
Speed: 40 ft.
AC: 20 (-2 size, +12 natural)
Attacks: Slam +23 melee, 2 stamps + 18 melee, or gore +23 melee
Damage: Slam 2d8+13, stamp 2d8+7, gore 2d12+19
Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Trample 2d12+19
Special Qualities: Lowlight vision, scent
Saves: Fort +18, Ref: +10, Will +5
Abilities: Str 36, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6
Skills: Listen +4, Spot +3

Climate/Terrain: Any cold land
Organization: Solitary or herd (5-20)
Challenge Rating: 10
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 17-28 HD (Huge)

A mastodon is a herbivore, fortunately for other creatures in its range. The herd is fiercely protective, however, and is likely to consider any approach an act of aggression, prompting a trampling and goring charge. A mastodon differs from an elephant primarily in its larger size, but also in its thicker hide and elongated tusks.

Combat

Trample (Ex): A mastodon can trample Medium-size or smaller creatures for automatic gore damage. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the mastodon can make a Reflex save (DC 31) to halve the damage.



David Eckelberry is a game designer for the D&D RPG team at Wizards of the Coast. He hates the cold.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL CHART

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (EL) for all of the keyed encounters in "Glacier Season."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
2	Taigiel, Male Half-dragon/Half-human Rgr15	17
3	Ice Golems (3)	16
4	Huge Winter Wolves (4)	16
5	Joltar and Kag, Male Trolls Ftr8 (2)	15
6	Kleo, Female Titan	21
7	Oftir, Male Human Clr14 (Erythnul)	14
8a	Tomar, Male Human Rog7/Asn8	15
8b	Ice Golems (5)	18
9	Mastodons (8)	16
10	Yevilindra, Female Juvenile White Dragon	5
11	Kotnar, Male Frost Giant Tribal Protector6	18
	Male Frost Giants (3)	
	Mastodons (4)	
12	Ice Mephits (4)	7
	Ice Golems (3)	16
13	100-foot-deep Pit Trap (1)	8
14	*Delayed Blast Fireball* Trap (1)	10
15	12-headed Lernaean Cryohydra (1)	15
17	Purple Worm (1)	13
20	Medium-size Monstrous Centipedes (2)	1
22	Suffocation Trap (1)	5
23	Green Slime Pit (1)	6
25	*Forcecage* Trap (1)	7
26	Ice Mephits (20)	13
	Elder Ice Paraelemental (1)	
27	Ettin Bbn5 (1)	10
28	Ice Golem (1)	13
29	Ogres (6)	7
30	Agle, Female Human Exp4	–
	Kline, Male Human Exp3	
34	Ogres (6)	7
35	Necterm, Female Half-orc Bbn17	17
36b	Urtruk, Male Frost Giant (1)	7
36c	Ogre (1)	2
38	Ice Golem (1)	13
39	Ogres (5)	7
40	White Pudding (1)	7
42	Ice Golems (2)	15
43	Ice Golems (4)	17
44	Helios, Male Human Wiz16	16
	Teleport Trap (1)	–
45	Dommeruth, Male Human Exp5	4
47	Guuzab, Hezrou (1)	14
	Akasa, Advanced Succubus (1)	12
54	Wejel, Male Human Rog14	15
	Jorman, Male Human Ftr13	
55	Samakel, Male Half-dragon/Half-human Ftr15	17
58	Acessiwal, Male Great White Wyrm	20

Note: The above chart does not include random encounters (see the "Random Encounters" sidebar for individual ELs) or encounters with non-combatant NPCs.

Valley of the Snails

Where Madness Reigns

by W. Jason Peck

artwork by Aaron Williams • cartography by Diesel

"Valley of the Snails" is a D&D adventure designed for four 1st-level player characters. PCs who survive the adventure should amass enough experience points (XPs) to advance to 2nd level. If the party contains more than four characters, individual PCs will earn fewer XPs and might not obtain sufficient experience to increase in level. Although set in the core D&D campaign setting, the adventure can be easily adapted for your own campaign. The adventure can also be modified for characters of higher level. See the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for help modifying the adventure for different party levels.

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

The village of Hulvin was established more than one hundred years ago amid the rolling hills and green fields of the Gran March, a few miles from the eastern edge of the Dim Forest. Hulvin's people are primarily hunters, trappers, and farmers. Many bold or foolhardy hunters and trappers have fallen prey to monsters that infest the woods, and over the years the Dim Forest's sinister reputation has discouraged most of Hulvin's current population from plumbing its depths. These days, local hunters and trappers resist the urge to plunder the forest and have made do with safer hunting grounds elsewhere. Common folk shun the forest with superstitious dread, and children are still cowed by their parents' stories of prowling monsters.

Despite the forest's reputation, not all who dwell within are evil. The ranger Jazzad has visited Hulvin for close to twenty years and has developed many friendships within the community. Perhaps the strongest such bond is with the local herbalist, Ryan Tollocke. The two have become friends, sharing many similar interests and doing a limited business in rare herbs. Indeed, it is widely known that Jazzad stays at the herbalist's home in early autumn.

Ryan has recently become worried for Jazzad. It is already mid-autumn, and the ranger has still not arrived. Even considering the whims of a forester's life, Ryan has never known Jazzad to be this late. With each passing day Ryan's concerns are magnified, and at last he has decided to do something about it.

Ryan's concern for his ranger friend is well founded: Jazzad was recently ambushed by goblins in the valley where he gathers most of the rare herbs that Ryan sells in Hulvin. The goblins call themselves the Slithering Snails, and although Jazzad knew of them, he thought them cowards who preferred to slink about by night and avoid confrontations. An uneasy truce had existed between the goblins and the ranger for more than five years, but Herruk the goblin witchdoctor recently freed a quasit from its prison in the valley. The quasit has managed to sway the witchdoctor to greater acts of evil, and Jazzad was caught by surprise when Herruk led an ambush against him. He managed to escape, but not before the witchdoctor shot him with a blowgun dart. The dart was coated with a madness-inducing poison brewed from a rare fungus that grows in the valley. The deluded ranger now prowls the valley, reduced to a wild animal by the poison.

Adventure Summary

To successfully complete the adventure, the PCs must enter the Dim Forest and locate the Valley of the Snails. Exploring the valley, the PCs must locate the missing ranger Jazzad and then capture, subdue, or otherwise convince him to accompany them back to Hulvin. With Jazzad in tow, they must return to Ryan Tollocke with either a sample of the mushroom used to brew the madness poison (from area I2) or the actual poison itself (carried by Herruk the goblin witchdoctor) so that they or the herbalist can brew an antidote.

The adventure begins when the PCs arrive in the village of Hulvin. The PCs might be simply passing through, perhaps on their way southwest into the giant-infested realms of Geoff and Sterich. Perhaps they seek adventure in the Dim Forest. Another option is that the PCs are all locals who band together for their first adventure. This is an excellent method of beginning a campaign with a close-knit band. Ultimately, it is up to you to establish why the PCs have just arrived in Hulvin.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Although this adventure is designed for 1st-level PCs, it can be modified for higher-level parties by increasing the number of opponents and making the main villains tougher. Here are a few general suggestions:

Jazzad the ranger is the main adversary and should be at least four levels higher than the average character level. Herruk the goblin witchdoctor—the secondary villain—should be 2 levels higher than the average character level.

Feel free to substitute monsters appearing in the adventure with creatures of higher Challenge Rating. Use the "Monsters Ranked by Challenge Rating" listing on pages 223-224 of the *Monster Manual* to select creatures of the appropriate Challenge Rating.

2nd-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but increase the likelihood of random encounters. If the PCs are having too easy a time, increase the number of goblin warriors and make both panthers in area **H4** engage in combat.

3rd-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, although the PCs will find the encounters much easier and probably won't amass enough XPs to gain a level unless you significantly increase the strength or numbers of opponents. Consider increasing the frequency of random encounters, replacing the goblins with gnolls or bugbears, and giving Jazzad access to a magic item that makes him more difficult to catch (such as *boots of striding and springing* or a *ring of invisibility*).

4th- to 5th-level PCs: In addition to the changes mentioned above, increase the damage dealt by traps, give Jazzad some additional animal companions, and give Herruk and Veshra some diabolical allies (such as a band of dretch or pack of fiendish wolves). You can also make the poisons used by Herruk and his tribe harder to resist by increasing their DCs or increasing the ability damage.

6th- to 7th-level PCs: Make Veshra a succubus who uses her alternate form ability to hide her true appearance. Provide all the villains with better armor, equipment, and magic items. Perhaps the villains are allied with some Underdark denizens (such as drow, orcs, or derro) or a powerful demon or undead creature.

If you increase the challenge of the adventure, you must also increase the amount of treasure to preserve the challenge-to-treasure ratio. This adventure has approximately 3,600 gp worth of treasure (though this does not include any poisons the PCs might recover from the goblins). To determine the amount of treasure needed, multiply 3,600 by the party's starting level. Thus, DMs wishing to modify the adventure for 3rd-level PCs should include approximately 10,800 gp (3,600 gp × 3) worth of treasure.

Assuming the PCs stay at least one night in Hulvin, Ryan Tollocke seeks them out at first light the next morning. Once Ryan has approached the PCs and has their attention, read or paraphrase the following boxed text. It might be necessary to alter the circumstances if the PCs don't plan to stay a full night in Hulvin or they refuse to speak with Ryan.

> The old man seats himself at the breakfast table, sliding several dishes aside to make room to rest his folded hands. "My name is Ryan Tollocke, the local herbalist. I have a friend who dwells in the Dim Forest—a ranger who, for the past fifteen years, has visited me each year in early autumn. When last we spoke, it was my understanding that nothing would be different this year, yet my friend is more than a month late and I've heard no word from him. This is not like Jazzad, and I fear for his safety. Jazzad dwells in a remote valley deep inside the Dim Forest. The forest is home to many wild animals and fierce monsters, and I would not dare send anyone into the woods who does not have the strength to fend off such beasts. What say you—will you help me find my friend?"

Those who make a successful Sense Motive skill check (DC 10) can determine that Ryan is completely sincere in his desire to find Jazzad, as over the years the two have become close. He wants the PCs to locate the missing ranger and return him safely to Hulvin. If they find the ranger well, Ryan wishes the PCs to convey his concerns to Jazzad and entice him to come to the village. If worse comes to worst and the PCs find Jazzad dead, Ryan asks them to return the body for proper burial. Ryan answers any questions the PCs might have to the best of his ability. He explains that he can expect no help from any of the locals (excluding the PCs, if they are natives). Despite their good natures and individual friendships with the ranger, most villagers fear the forest and refuse to enter it. Ryan assures the PCs that the local fear of the forest is well founded. Ryan can provide the PCs with general information about the region and the ranger Jazzad (see the "Adventure Background" section and area **H1** for more details). However, Ryan knows nothing about the goblins or the current state of his friend.

Ryan is hoping the PCs might complete the quest out of the goodness of their hearts, but he is prepared to offer them their pick of three magic potions for the safe return of his friend or word of Jazzad's whereabouts and condition. If the PCs push for more rewards and succeed at a Charisma check (DC 13), Ryan is willing to part with all five potions in his possession. Ryan delivers the agreed-upon reward once the mission is complete. Ryan urges them to leave at once but does not protest if the PCs insist on gathering supplies in the village before they depart.

Creature (EL –): Ryan Tollocke is a frail-looking man in his sixties with gray hair and a white beard. His blue eyes are bright and thoughtful, and he likes to talk.

Ryan Tollocke, Male Human Sor4: CR 4; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 4d4; hp 10; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d4-1/crit 19-20, dagger); or +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL NG; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 8; Dex 12, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Alchemy +5, Heal +1, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Profession (herbalist) +8. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Extend Spell, Scribe Scroll.

Spells (6/7/4, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, detect poison, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, resistance;* 1st—*change self, protection from evil, spider climb;* 2nd—*bull's strength.*

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, dagger, light crossbow and 12 bolts (kept at home), five potions (*bull's strength, change self, protection from evil* [×2], and *spider climb*, all kept at home), belt pouch containing 15 cp, 23 sp, and 12 gp.

Hulvin (Village): Conventional; AL NG; 200 gp limit; Assets 3,000 gp; Population 312; Mixed (75% human, 14% elf, 8% half-elf, 1% dwarf, 1% gnome, 1% halfling).

Authority Figures: Constable Randolph Bertram, male human Ari2.

Important Characters: Rhonda Bron, female halfling Com3 (pastry chef); Tulvis, male human Exp3 (proprietor of The Forest's Edge Inn); Ryan Tollocke, male human Sor4 (herbalist); Detmir Brand, male half-elf Rog4 (fugitive); Brother Fulgrim, male human Clr3 (Pelor/healer).

Others: Village deputies, War2 (×6); War1 (×15); Exp2 (×2); Rog2 (×2); fugitive gang, Rog1 (×4); Brd1 (×1); Com3 (×2); Com2 (×3); Com1 (×271).

The Dim Forest

The Dim Forest is a tangle of gnarled oaks and clinging brush with a canopy so thick that little sunlight reaches the forest floor. There are few pathways into the forest's depths, and the gloomy recesses are a haven for evil monsters and other beasts. Unlike most forests, the Dim Forest is oppressively quiet and sightings of small, innocuous animals are rare. The region closest to Hulvin is tamer than most, but there are still dangers within. Use the "Random Encounters" sidebar to determine encounters in the forest and valley.

Only one narrow pathway winds into the trees near Hulvin. This trail is overgrown in places with hanging vines and shrubbery. Movement along this trail must be in single file. Even in such cases, movement is at two-thirds the normal rate. Those attempting to move through the forest without the benefit of a path move at one-third the normal rate.

A. The Devil's Plate.

The faint path runs past a formation of low rocks. The largest rock is a flat-topped circular stone 8 feet across. Stacked all over the stone's surface are hundreds of pumpkins in various states of decay. Each pumpkin has been carved with a leering visage, and all face the dark treeline not more than two hundred yards down the path.

This natural rock formation fuels the superstitions of many residents of Hulvin. When the season permits, a handful of locals come here weekly to place fresh jack-o-lanterns upon the "Devil's Plate," as the formation is known. It is believed that the twisted faces of the jack-o-lanterns frighten away evil creatures from the forest. This is, however, mere superstition.

B. Hunting Traps.

The path curls around a huge oak with twisted roots before entering a shadowy glade. The glade is roughly circular, thirty paces in diameter, and covered with a carpet of dry leaves. A wooden box lies just inside the glade to the right of the trail, and a small circle of stones surrounds a mound of ash in the clearing's center. Beyond the circle, two trails exit the clearing, one to the northwest and one to the southwest.

The firepit (mound of ash) is primarily used by goblin hunters from the Valley of the Snails. They stop here every few nights to check the pit traps they have set in the clearing to catch prey (see **Trap** below). The goblins have not visited the clearing in days. A rotten piece of ant-covered venison lies amid the ashes.

When the PCs enter the clearing, have them make a Spot check (DC 15). Those who succeed notice the wooden box rattle for a few seconds. The box is an animal trap, with a spring-loaded gate that locks creatures inside once the bait has been taken. The trap has been sprung and currently contains a half-starved fox (see **Creature** below). The wooden box measures 4 ft. × 2.5 ft. × 2.5 ft. and employs a simple locking mechanism that can be opened by resetting the gate.

Wooden Box: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Break DC 16; Reset Gate (Intelligence check DC 10).

Any PC exploring the southwest trailhead who makes a successful Search check (DC 12) spots footprints. (The northwest trailhead is devoid of footprints.) A PC with the Track feat who makes a successful Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 15) can tell that these tracks belong to six goblins. All the footprints disappear down the southwest trail, but a PC with the Track feat can attempt to follow them. Following the tracks for one mile requires the successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 18 during the day, DC 22 at night). See the Track feat description in the *Player's Handbook* (pages 85-86) for modifiers. The tracks continue along the southwest trail for 2 miles before ending at a hidden trailhead (see area **D** for details).

Creature (EL 1/3): The fox cowers away from anyone peering inside the box, snarling if a hand or item is thrust toward him. If the gate is opened, the fox leaps out and tries to flee into the brush surrounding the glade. Even if he escapes, he is famished and doesn't run far.

This fox was once an animal companion of Jazzad, and PCs notice the dirty leather collar he wears with a successful Spot check (DC 18). Close examination of the collar reveals the name "Willy" etched on its surface. PCs can befriend Willy by offering him food. Druids or rangers who use an *animal friendship* spell can gain Willy as their own animal companion, though he is fatigued (see *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 84) and remains so until fed. Willy and Grall the blink dog (see area **G**) dislike each other, and Willy constantly growls when Grall is within 40 feet.

Willy the Fox: CR 1/3; Small Animal (2 ft. 8 in. long); HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural); Atk +1 melee (1d4, bite); SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 7.

Skills: Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +2 (+10 when tracking by scent).

SQ–Scent (Ex): See page 10 of the *Monster Manual.*

Trap (EL 1 per pit): There are three pits covered with lids of twigs and leaves spread around the firepit in a roughly triangular pattern. Because they are poorly constructed, they are easily detected by a successful Search check (DC 15). Each must be detected separately. Any PC who simply walks to one of the next trails has a 1-in-4 chance of stepping in a pit.

10-foot-deep Spiked Pits (3): CR 1; 1d6 points of damage, +2 melee (1d4 wooden stakes for 1d3 points of damage per successful hit); Reflex save avoids (DC 20); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 10).

C. Gromph's Camp. If the PCs take the northwest trail, they eventually reach the camp of Gromph the satyr. Read or paraphrase the following to them at this time:

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Dim Forest: For every hour the PCs spend in the forest, roll percentile dice (d%) on the following table:

Roll d%	Creatures Encountered	EL
01-60	No Encounter	—
61-70	Wolves (3)	3
71-80	Boar (1)	2
81-90	Tree Viper (1)	1
91-00	Goblin Hunters (4)	3

Valley of the Snails: For every hour the PCs spend in the valley, roll percentile dice (d%) on the following table:

Roll d%	Creatures Encountered	EL
01-60	No Encounter	—
61-70	Boar (1)	2
71-80	Panther (1)	2
81-90	Goblin Hunters (4)	3
91-00	Jazzad the Woodsman	5

Wolves (EL 3): Small packs of wolves are common in the Dim Forest. They immediately attack the PCs.

Wolves (3): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual,* page 204.

Boar (EL 2): The PCs stumble across a wild boar that attacks fearlessly until slain.

Boar (1): hp 22; *Monster Manual,* page 194.

Tree Viper (EL 1): Coiled around a nearby tree limb is a camouflaged, 5-foot-long snake. PCs who fail a Spot check (opposed by the snake's Hide check) are surprised; the viper has a Hide skill modifier of +12. It attacks the nearest PC and flees into the woods if wounded.

Medium-Size Tree Viper (1): hp 9; *Monster Manual,* page 202.

Panther (EL 2): While traveling through the valley, the PCs encounter one of the panthers from area **H4**. When first encountered, the panther is lurking in a tree. It roars if anyone approaches within 20 feet. Those who fail to heed this warning and approach closer are attacked.

Panther (1): see area **H4** for statistics.

Goblin Hunters (EL 3): The PCs encounter three goblins led by Agrand, a goblin rogue. Have the goblins make an opposed Move Silently check against the PCs' Listen skill checks; for simplicity, roll once using the goblins' lowest Move Silently skill modifier (+3). If the goblins win the roll, they surprise the PCs and launch a volley of poisoned darts at them before fleeing into the brush. (Agrand deals extra damage for the successful sneak attack.) If the goblins do not surprise the PCs, they flee toward the Valley of the Snails (if encountered in the forest) or area **J** (if encountered in the valley).

Agrand, Male Goblin Rog2: see area **J** for statistics.

Goblins (3): see area **J** for statistics.

Jazzad the Woodsman (EL 5): The PCs encounter the mad ranger Jazzad as he patrols the valley. His reaction depends upon whether this is the first time he has encountered them (see area **H1** for details).

Jazzad, Male Human Rgr5: see area **H1** for statistics.

After passing through a particularly overgrown region, the narrow trail gives way to a sunlit glen carpeted with deep grass. The glen is 50 feet in diameter, with two more trails exiting on the other side, one to the north and another to the west. Suddenly you hear a resounding belch, followed by a thundering laugh that carries over the glen.

This clearing currently serves as the camp of a wandering satyr. If the PCs enter the clearing, Gromph staggers out of the northwestern brush and hails them. He swaggers drunkenly as he approaches, half-heartedly singing a bawdy tune, and asks PCs if they have any "spirits" with them. If they claim to have ale or wine, he tries to cajole them into giving him some. If they seem reluctant, he attempts to negotiate, claiming to be an expert on the local woods and offering to trade them information. If the PCs claim to have neither ale nor wine, Gromph snorts at them before staggering back into the trees.

Gromph is not as drunk as he appears. In fact, he sees the PCs as a source of "free spirits" and as marks for a good joke. Gromph knows little about the forest and its inhabitants, as he typically stays near its fringes. He enjoys lying and fabricates stories concerning what lies ahead. During "negotiations" he attempts to draw out details the PCs have already encountered and pile lies on them. He does not know Jazzad but is quick to say otherwise. ("Ah, a witless fellow, and yet so full of life. We've had many a drink together in the meadows. A gullible fool, but he knows his spirits, what!") Ultimately, he expects to be compensated for his information, attempting to sample the payment beforehand if possible. He refuses to cooperate if he believes the PCs are deceitful or untrustworthy.

Creature (EL 2): Gromph is a habitual liar and drunkard. He is rude and uncouth even to woodsmen, and he speaks with a constant slur. Even when speaking on topics that interest him, such as liquor, he is easily distracted. When spinning his lies and "negotiating" with PCs, he frequently stops to leer and wink at female PCs with high Charisma scores. Gromph fights only if he must, preferring to flee if threatened with violence.

Gromph the Satyr: hp 24; *Monster Manual,* page 160.

Treasure: Gromph carries the following items of value with him: an elegant ivory flute (worth 120 gp), a dagger, a jar of honey (worth 2 gp), a wooden mug, a pouch containing 31 sp and 24 gp, and a half-empty jug of poor-quality moonshine worth 3 sp (hidden back in the trees).

D. Hidden Trail. The goblins have concealed the southern trail with branches and leaves. The camouflage is not perfect, however, and PCs passing by notice the concealed trail with a successful Spot check (DC 20).

Beyond a screen of brush, another slim trail leads south. There is no sign of movement in the nearby woods.

The concealed trail to the south leads to the eastern edge of the Valley of the Snails (area **F**) and is the primary route used by the goblins. PCs following the goblins' tracks from area **B** discover that they end abruptly in front of the hidden trail entrance. The footprints resume along the south trail and can be followed in the same manner as described in area **B**. These tracks end at the eastern edge of the valley.

PCs who continue west along the main trail emerge from the woods just north of the Valley of the Snails (area **E**).

Valley of the Snails

Though the Valley of the Snails is heavily wooded like the surrounding Dim Forest, it is virtually a world apart. Whereas the Dim Forest is dark and foreboding, the valley's floor is open, sunny, and teaming with life. The valley is abuzz with birdsong, and encounters with harmless wildlife are far more frequent. The valley takes its name from the rare blue snails indigenous only to this remote location. These mildly poisonous snails are so abundant in the valley that one can find them lurking under every other upturned stone or leaf. The goblins here have found several uses for these snails (see area J for details).

Read or paraphrase the following boxed text when the PCs first reach the valley:

> Before you lies a great valley, several miles long and surrounded by steep cliffs. The valley looks like nothing so much as a big crater, filled with a sea of green treetops swaying in the breeze. You catch glimpses of a stream snaking through the trees. Here and there, the trees part to reveal grassy fields. Rising up at the western end of the valley is a huge, black rock formation devoid of vegetation.

The valley is ringed with steep cliffs and has only three safe "descent points" (areas **E**, **F**, and **K**). PCs unwilling to use one of these descent points can attempt to scale the cliffs.

The cliffs average 50 feet high and consist mainly of rough rocks with a smattering of tough vegetation. To descend the cliffs safely, a PC must make a successful Climb check (DC 15) each round; the number of Climb checks varies depending on the base speed of each PC. PCs climb at half normal speed, so a dwarf with a base movement of 20 feet would climb at a rate of 10 feet per round and need to make five successful Climb checks to descend the cliff safely (one check per round spent climbing). The DC of the climb can be reduced using ropes and climber's kits; see the Climb skill description in the *Player's Handbook* (pages 64-65) for climbing modifiers.

A failed Climb check indicates no progress unless the check fails by 5 or more, in which case the PC falls. Plummeting PCs take 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen.

E. The Whistling Caves.

> The trail crosses an open field of waist-high grass and thorny shrubbery. After meandering across the field, the trail ends abruptly at a small hill 30 yards from a precipice to the south. The area surrounding the knoll has been cleared. A dark, 6-foot-diameter hole gapes in the earth at the foot of the hill. A shrill whistling rises from the orifice.

This small cave network serves as one of the three main entrances into the valley. Jazzad frequently uses these caves to enter and exit the valley, though he has not set foot here in over five months. The goblins have recently set a trap here to discourage invaders. Despite this, the goblins feel this complex is too conspicuous and avoid it whenever possible.

Created eons ago by the seepage of rain water, the caves are thick with natural subterranean formations including stalactites, stalagmites, and draperies. These features are brittle and easily damaged by brushing against them. In addition to these features, many areas of the caves contain shelves or ledges. The height of the ledges (in feet) is indicated on the map. Unlike the cave formations, these are quite stable and easy to climb (DC 10). Several of the passages have gradual slopes, and the complex eventually exits on the floor of the valley. Unless otherwise noted, all caves and passages average 12 feet high, though nooks or alcoves have ceilings as low as 3 feet.

VALLEY OF THE SNAILS
N
0
600
YARDS
trail
K
J
+100'
+200'
+300'
+30'
+15'
+15'
+45'
+30'
H
G
E
trail
+30'
+30'
+15'
I
F

E1. Sinkhole Entrance.

Light streams into this dark cavern from a circular hole in the ceiling. The cavern is divided into two sections, with a large shelf at the northwest end occupying about a third of the space. The shelf is littered with loose stones. The rest of the chamber's uneven floor is covered with stalagmites. Two tunnels exit the cave from this lower section, one to the east and one to the south behind a thin pillar of stone. A hollow whistling sound whispers from the tunnel to the east.

Aside from the occasional bat, this cave is unoccupied. The cavern's ceiling is about 15 feet high, though this drops to 6 feet over the shelf. PCs who make a successful Search check (DC 10) discover a slightly rusted iron piton driven into the stone near the edge of the shelf. Left here by Jazzad, this piton is perfect for attaching a rope to lower oneself to the floor.

PCs who search the lower cave floor and make a successful Search check (DC 18) locate three or four footprints. A successful Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 15) reveals that these are goblin tracks. They are more than a week old, however, and this coupled with the fact that they lead down the bare stone floor to the east makes them difficult to follow (DC 28). They lead into area **E3**.

E2. Deep Pit.

The downward-sloping passage winds sharply around a corner before ending at a dark pit. The pit's edge is rough and sharp. A pungent order rises from the inky darkness below.

This pit plunges straight down for 200 feet. Any simple test, such as dropping a stone and counting the seconds before it hits, attests to the staggering depth. Though a fall would almost certainly be fatal for low-level characters, the pit is dangerous only to the foolhardy.

Development: PCs who safely descend the pit find tunnels branching off into the Underdark; these tunnels are beyond the scope of this adventure, and you can discourage their exploration by assuming that the tunnels have all collapsed.

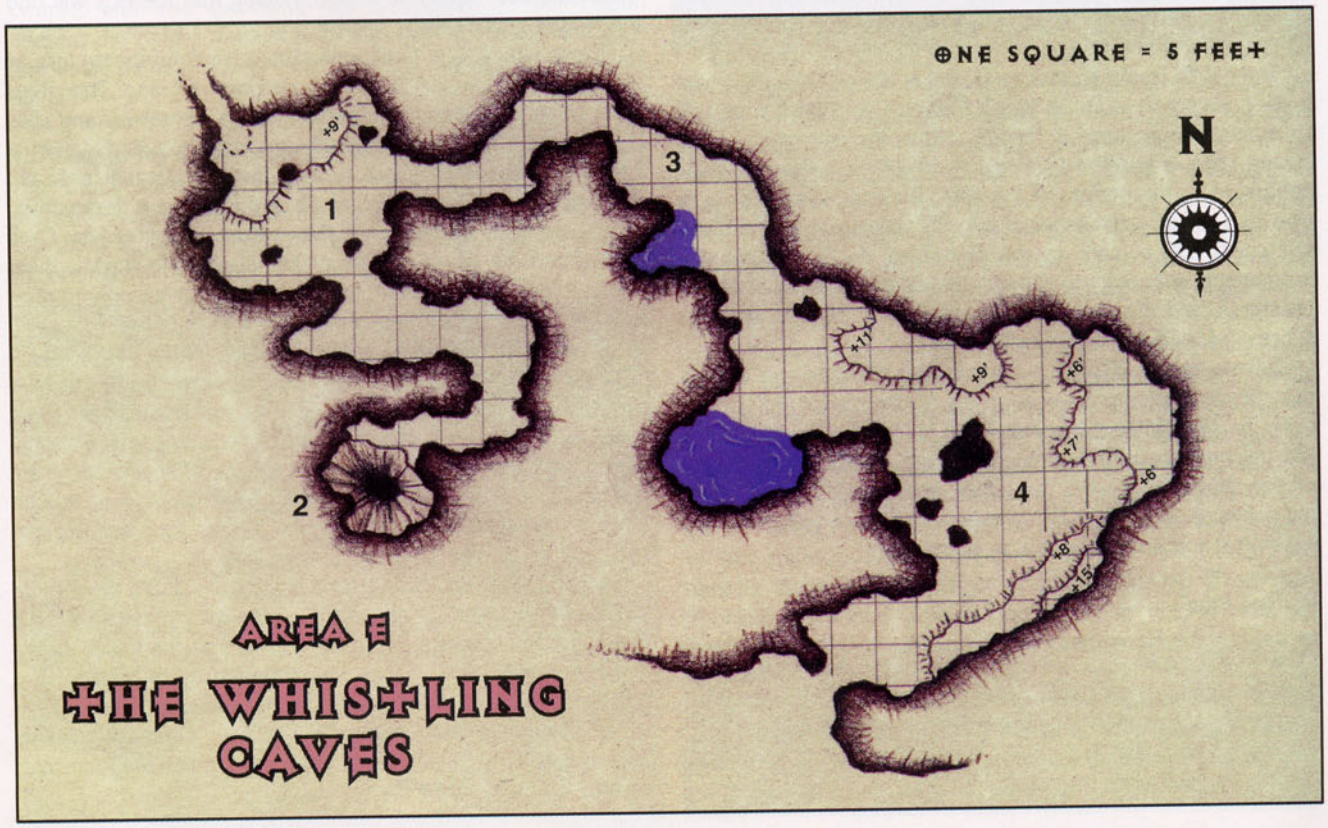
E3. Goblin Trap. The whistling heard from either entrance is caused by fresh air passing through the rock formations and narrow apertures in this oddly shaped passage. At its narrowest point, this passage can be negotiated by only one Medium-size creature at once. Where the passage narrows, the goblins have set a **Trap**. At its widest point, near a pool of fresh water, lurks the **Creature**.

Creature (EL 1): Days after the goblins erected their **Trap**, a darkmantle moved in. Originally from the Underdark, it entered these caves from the pit in area **E2**. The darkmantle hangs from the ceiling near the small pool, disguised as a stalactite. It can be noticed with a successful Spot check opposed by the creature's Hide check. It attacks the first PC or creature to pass beneath it, always preceding this attack with the use of its *darkness* ability.

Darkmantle (1): hp 9; *Monster Manual*, page 39.

Trap (EL 1): A successful Search check (DC 13) reveals a crude trip-rope strung across the floor where the passage narrows to a mere 2 feet. The rope is attached to a large basket filled with fist-sized stones set precariously on an overhead ledge. Tripping the rope causes the stones to spill over the victim. The trap can be easily avoided by stepping over the rope; removing the trap requires a Disable Device check.

Rockfall Trap: CR 1; 2d4 points of damage; Reflex saving throw (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 13); Disable Device (DC 13).



E4. Bat Roost.

Shadows cloak the ceiling and walls of this large cave. A white, flaky substance cakes the floor, and a foul odor hangs in the air. Soft fluttering sounds can occasionally be heard over the whistling wind.

The ceiling here ranges from 20 to 30 feet high. The cave contains three large shelves as well as numerous smaller ledges. The cave is home to hundreds of bats that sleep atop the shelves or hang from the ceiling during the day. Each evening, they exit the cave through the south entrance in a cloud of beating wings and don't return until just before dawn.

A successful Search skill check (DC 16) reveals a vague trail through the guano. This trail was left by the goblin party that set the trap in area **E3**. The goblins' trail continues outside the caves, heading south through the reed patch (area **G**) to the river (where the goblins took to canoes).

Creatures (EL 1/3): Though startled by bright lights and loud noises, the bats pose no threat to those who maintain a respectful distance. PCs who prod too closely (come within 10 feet) or cause an extremely loud noise (such as a bang of metal on stone) cause the bats to flee the cave in a massive cloud of thrashing wings and spinning bodies. Every PC in the cave at this time must make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 11) or be knocked down for 1d4 points of damage. Those who succeed sustain no damage.

Bats (500+): hp 1 each; *Monster Manual*, page 193.

F. Cliff Vines.

A path meanders through the trees and crosses a small field of tall grass before ending at the lip of vast cliff. The cliffs at this point are covered with vines and twisted shrubs that run down the entire face for about 50 yards in either direction.

The goblin tracks from area **D** end at the cliffside. PCs who make a successful Search check (DC 20) can find a rope tied to a rocky outcropping hidden within the shrubbery. This strong rope is knotted all along its length at 2-foot intervals and drops to the bottom of the cliff. The rope can hold up to 600 lbs., and PCs can descend the cliff with a successful Climb skill check (DC 0) each round. The vines, on the other hand, are not robust enough to support the weight of Small or larger creatures, and this can be discerned by any PC who makes a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 10).

Development: PCs who successfully descend the cliff at this spot and attempt to pick up the goblin trail at the bottom have the same chances as described in area **D**. The tracks follow the path westward, passing through area **I** before ending on the shores of a lake. The goblin tracks end at the lake, as the goblins hopped in their canoes (which were parked on the lakeshore) and headed upstream to the north.

G. Reed Patch.

The trail crosses open fields for several hundred yards before ending at a wall of reeds. The sound of the wind stirring the reeds is interrupted for a moment by a dog barking somewhere nearby. The interruption is brief, and soon there is only the sound of the reeds.

This large patch of reeds is composed of a rare variety found only in this valley. The reeds average 7 feet tall and are covered with a slick residue. This peculiar variety is the favored food of the curious blue snails found in the valley, and they are concentrated throughout this patch in vast numbers (see **Trap** below).

A successful Search check (DC 10) confirms that the trail continues through the reeds. The ground is very soggy, with small stretches of shallow standing water. This condition, coupled with the height of the reeds, makes travel difficult, reducing movement by half. PCs who leave the trail and cannot see over the reeds must succeed at an Intuit Direction check (DC 10) or become disoriented. Disoriented PCs must spend twenty minutes fumbling through the reeds before they regain their bearings and automatically fall into the **Trap**.

The PCs encounter a large, yellowish hound shortly before reaching the river that cuts across the valley. This creature appears behind the PCs and attempts to get their attention by barking at them. This is Grall, a blink dog (see **Creature** below).

Creature (EL 2): Grall likes to eat the snails that cling to the reeds; having been raised on blue snails, he is immune to their poisonous effects.

Grall serves as Jazzad's companion, though the ranger drove him away shortly after succumbing to his madness. Grall is worried for his friend and cannot figure out what to do.

Although he cannot speak any language other than his own, Grall is intelligent. He recognizes the PCs as adventurers and attempts to usher them north and then along the path that heads toward the western part of the valley, barking to get their attention. If the PCs follow him, Grall stays ahead of the party using his *blink* ability, sniffing about for snails while waiting for the PCs to catch up. He leads them across the valley until the PCs reach the river near area **J**. At this point, he uses his *dimension door* ability to depart, hoping that the PCs will find the hidden goblin village nearby.

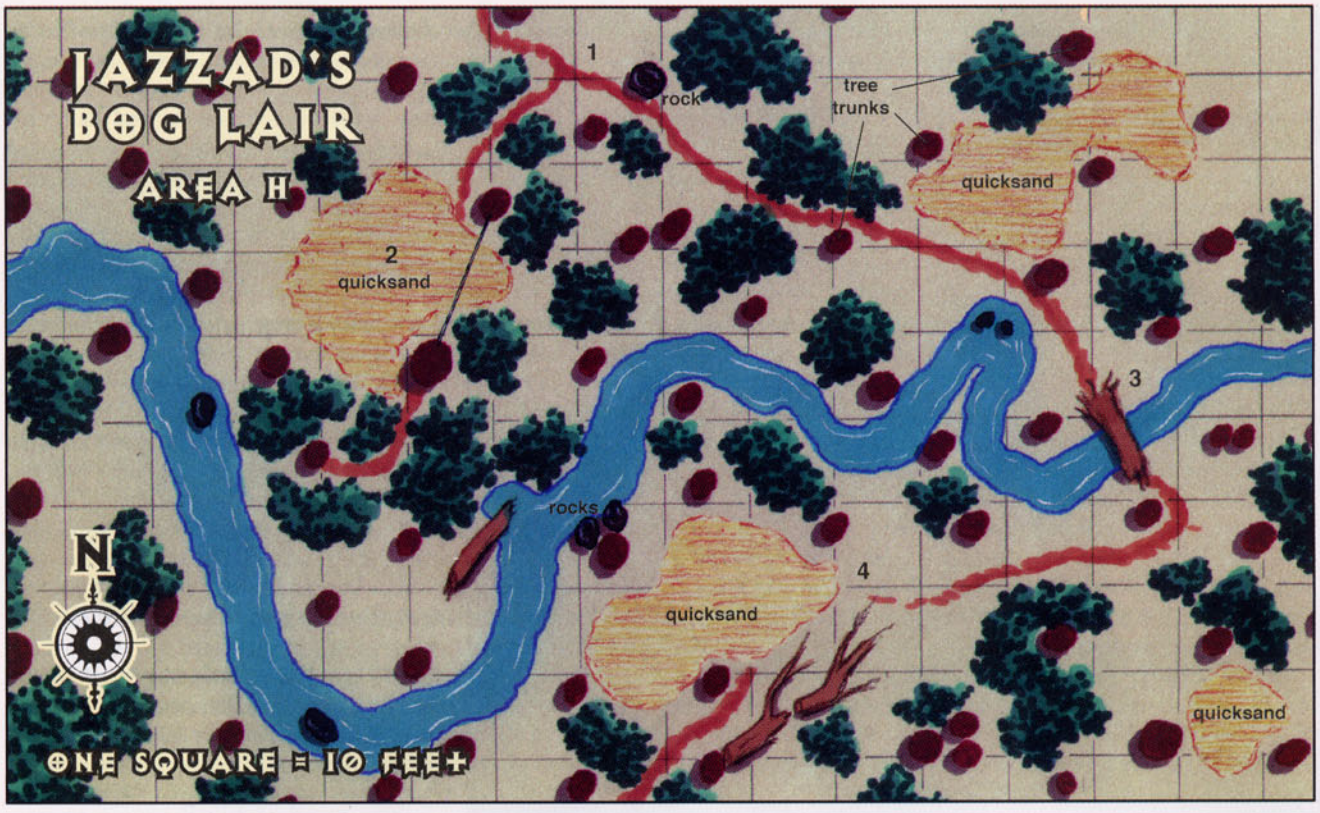
Those who follow Grall experience random encounters at twice the normal rate due to his constant barking. This gives Grall ample opportunity to gauge the PCs' demeanor and abilities. If the PCs prove themselves competent and act in a "good" manner, he decides to lead them to Jazzad (area **H**), thinking that they can help him. If the PCs seem destructive, incompetent, or wicked, or if they refuse to follow him, Grall uses *dimension door* to get away. He attempts to shadow them through the valley, interfering with their progress only to protect Jazzad or some other innocent valley creature.

Grall the Blink Dog: hp 22; *Monster Manual*, page 26.

Trap (EL 1/3): Anyone trying to move through the reeds is covered with blue snails. Those who do not immediately clear away the snails risk being poisoned by their sticky secretions. Due to the nature of this contact poison, PCs can add their armor AC bonus (if any) to their Fortitude saves, though shields are excluded. Leather cloaks, gloves, or other protective gear add a flat +2 bonus to the save.

Any PC who willfully ingests a blue snail suffers the effects of the poison, no save allowed. A successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) allows a PC to determine that the snails' sticky secretions are mildly poisonous, although the effects of the poison can only be determined through experimentation.

Poisonous Blue Snails: CR 1/3; Fortitude save negates (DC 11; initial and secondary, 1 temporary point of Dexterity); Search (DC 5); Disable Device (n/a).



H. Jazzad's Bog Lair. A stream passes through low ground at this point, forming a small bog. A pair of mated panthers use a small cave in this region as their den, and Jazzad chose long ago to set his own camp nearby knowing that the local goblins feared the great cats. Jazzad's special affinity with animals coupled with the quicksand that is common in this region enabled the ranger to dwell here with confidence that the goblins would be held at bay. Until recently, this reasoning proved sound.

H1. Beast at the Crossroads. The following boxed text should be read the first time the PCs approach this area from the north—and only if Jazzad is still on the loose. If the PCs approach from the south or Jazzad has been captured, modify the description accordingly.

> The pathway writhes like a serpent across the soggy ground, weaving around thickets and moss-covered trees. After a time it turns into a small clearing shaded by an enormous weeping willow. Across the clearing, standing atop a large rock, is a beast-man of some sort. He wears forester's garb, but his head is that of a boar. The boar's face is caked with dried blood and droops severely, especially over the intensely blue eyes, where thick folds are bunched.
>
> As the figure sees you, he jumps up and down atop the rock and waves a spear in your direction. His body shakes as he flails his limbs about. Suddenly, his spasmodic display ends and he stands erect atop the rock. Stabbing the spear at you, he calls out in a deep hollow voice, "Invaders! You trod upon the sacred sanctuary of the goddess Ehlonna and risk her divine wrath! Begone from this valley and leave its beauty undefiled or I, the King of the Boars, will strike you down in fair Ehlonna's name!"

This boar-headed man is, in fact, the ranger Jazzad. He is currently mad (see the **Creature** below) and no longer remembers his true identity. He ignores all attempts at diplomacy and flees down the southeast path regardless of the PCs' response. As he flees, he whoops and hollers incoherently. In the event the PCs approach area **H** from the south, Jazzad heads immediately to area **H4** upon hearing the panther's warning roar.

Creature (EL 5): Jazzad has roamed the Dim Forest all his life and considers the Valley of the Snails and the surrounding woods his home. Normally a gruff man who enjoys the company of animals and the solitude of the wild over that of humans and civilization, Jazzad struck up a friendship with Ryan Tollocke fifteen years ago. In the herbalist's love of plants and herbs, Jazzad found a kindred spirit. Whereas it was once a detested chore to visit civilization to renew supplies and mend gear, Jazzad found himself looking forward to his yearly visits to Hulvin.

All these memories were washed away by the goblin witchdoctor's ambush. Although he was surprised by the attack, Jazzad was resourceful and managed to fight his way free of the goblin trap. Unfortunately, the goblin witchdoctor shot him with a poisoned dart before the ranger made his escape. The poison—a foul brew concocted from a rare mushroom with the aid of Veshra the quasit—attacked Jazzad's mind. Within hours of the ambush, Jazzad lost all memory of his former self. Shortly thereafter, he started to hallucinate. He drove away his blink dog friend Grall and now believes himself to be the Boar King, devoted consort to the goddess Ehlonna, protector of the Woodlands.

Jazzad the Woodsman, Male Human Rgr5: CR 5; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 5d10+5; hp 39; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft. (150 ft. when running due to Run feat); AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 leather armor); Atk +7 melee (1d6+2/crit ×3, halfspear);

+6/+6 melee (1d6+2, 2 masterwork handaxes); or +8 ranged (1d6+2, thrown masterwork handaxe); SA Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats (in light or no armor); SQ favored enemies (1st—beasts, 2nd—vermin); AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Animal Empathy +6, Climb +5, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Escape Artist +3, Handle Animal +4, Hide +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Spot +5, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +7. *Feats:* Alertness, Endurance, Run, Track.

Spell (1, base save DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—*entangle*.

Possessions: Leather armor, halfspear, two masterwork handaxes, scuffed boots, dark green cloak, pair of silver bracers studded with agates (worth 80 gp for the pair), dagger, backpack containing four days of trail rations, a full waterskin, cracked lantern, vial of oil, tinderbox, pouch with 10 sp and 10 gp, and an iron key (opens iron strongbox in area **H2**).

Description: Jazzad is a tall, muscular man in his early forties. His once dark hair and beard are turning gray. In his current precarious mental state he appears filthy, covered with a thick coat of dry mud. In addition, he wears a crude mask fashioned from a boar's head and has twigs and flowers woven into his clothes and beard.

Tactics: In his deranged state, Jazzad sees himself as a divine being of nature. The mere presence of other humanoids in the valley detracts from its natural beauty. This attitude gives him a +4 circumstance bonus to Will saves against *charm* spells and effects cast by humanoid creatures.

Jazzad's goal is to drive the PCs and the goblins out of the valley, though the goblins' hidden village is too well protected to risk a direct assault. Jazzad subconsciously fears Herruk (the goblin witchdoctor) and his "pet spider" and cannot bring himself to face them directly. Instead, he has wandered the valley in the past few weeks, destroying the goblins' canoes and animal traps and looking for an opportunity to ambush them. He often returns to his camp here in the bog, as the place feels familiar and safe to him.

If this is the first time Jazzad has encountered the PCs, he attempts to lead them into dangerous areas (areas **H3** and **H4**), hoping that these dangers will frighten them away. During all these encounters, he stands away from the action whenever possible and ridicules the PCs, repeatedly commanding them to "Flee the valley, or face the divine wrath of Ehlonna!" Given the chance, he casts *entangle* on the PCs. He flees any direct confrontation, using his knowledge of the landscape and his ranger abilities to evade pursuers. Only when he witnesses PCs harming animals, such as the panthers in area **H4**, does he confront them in melee. Even in this case, Jazzad attacks to subdue (see *Player's Handbook,* pages 134-135) and flees if reduced to 10 hp or fewer. Jazzad does not willingly surrender to the PCs. To complete their mission, they must capture, *charm*, or subdue him. If conscious and not gagged, he continues to threaten his captors with "divine wrath" unless they release him.

In the event that Jazzad evades the PCs and they remain in the valley, he attempts to circle back to the last place he saw them and track them. If he succeeds, he follows them from place to place in the valley and only shows himself if they become involved in some dangerous encounter. In such a case, he behaves as described above, hoping to convince them to leave the valley. If he sees the PCs battling Herruk, he loses the last vestige of self-control and helps them fight the evil witchdoctor. When the battle is over, he attempts to flee as described above.

H2. Jazzad's Campsite.

The trail winds back into the shadows of several weeping willows, ending next to a gnarled oak trunk beyond which lies an open space choked with fallen leaves. The stench of wet vegetation hangs heavy in the still air.

The "open space" is actually a large patch of quicksand (see **Trap** below). PCs who inspect the oak trunk and make a successful Search skill check (DC 15) notice that several hidden hand-holds have been carved into its surface. These hand-holds provide a +2 circumstance bonus to all attempts to scale the tree, which requires a successful Climb skill check (DC 15). High in the branches (18 feet up), Jazzad has strung a rope across the quicksand to another oak to the southwest. The rope is disguised in the canopy above and can only be seen from the forest floor with a successful Spot skill check (DC 16). The rope is automatically seen by any PC who climbs the tree and looks around.

Jazzad uses the rope to cross over to the larger oak on the other side of the quicksand, behind which he has hidden his campsite. PCs can cross the rope with a successful Climb check (DC 15) or a Balance check (DC 20). A failure by 5 or more on either of these checks causes a fall into the quicksand below. This results in 1d6 points of subdual damage and forces the victim to contend with the quicksand (see below).

The oak tree on the southwest side of the quicksand is similar to the one next to the trail. A set of hand-holds has been carved into its southern side. A small path behind this tree winds away into the brush, curling into a tiny hollow in the bushes next to two saplings. The only items of interest in this hollow are a small circle of stones containing cold ashes and a mound of fresh earth about 3 feet in diameter. Jazzad has hidden his **Treasure** under this mound in a shallow hole.

Trap (EL 1): This clearing contains a pool of muddy quicksand. Due to the nature of the surrounding ground and the fallen leaves, the patch of quicksand is virtually indistinguishable. A successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 16) reveals the quicksand. PCs unaware of the danger blunder 2d4+2 feet into the area before realizing the problem.

Pulling oneself from the quicksand requires a full-round action and a successful Strength check (DC 10 +1 per previous failure). PCs more than 5 feet from the edge of the quicksand cannot attempt to escape without the aid of those outside the quicksand, although they can take a full-round action to attempt to move closer to the edge—this requires a successful Swim check (DC 15 +1 per previous failure). Trapped PCs aided by one or more comrades outside the quicksand receive +2 circumstance bonus to their Strength check for each assisting character who succeeds at a Strength check (DC 10), as detailed on page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*.

PCs trapped in the quicksand sink at a rate of 6 inches per round. A character fully immersed begins to drown (see page 85 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Quicksand: CR 1; sink 6 inches per round, begin drowning once fully submerged; Strength check (DC 10 +1 per previous failure) or Swim check (DC 15 +1 per previous failure) permits escape; Search (DC 16); Disable Device (n/a).

Treasure: Buried beneath the mound is a small, locked iron strongbox (Jazzad carries the key) containing 100 sp, 32 gp, a small leather pouch containing nine pearls (10 gp each), a leather-bound book of folk tales titled *Tales of the Woodland Fairies* (worth 30 gp to a collector), and a *+1 dagger*.

Locked Iron Strongbox: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; Break (DC 26); Open Lock (DC 20).

H3. Fallen Log.

The bare trunk of a twisted log lies fallen across the stream here, forming a primitive bridge. Though many bare branches protrude from its sides, the top seems to have been cleared.

Aside from the occasional knot, the top of the log has indeed been cleared and can be crossed by making a successful Dexterity check (DC 5). Failure indicates a fall into the 6-foot-deep stream (no damage). The log can support a total of 600 lbs. Any weight exceeding this causes the log to snap in half, dumping everything on it into the stream.

If the PCs are chasing Jazzad this way and he has time, he pours a vial of oil on the log, increasing the Dexterity check required to cross it to DC 15. Once across the stream, Jazzad flees to area **H4**.

H4. Panthers' Lair. The animals that lurk here cannot be surprised unless the PCs take extreme measures to conceal their presence (*invisibility* and *silence* spells, for instance).

The path enters a large clearing cluttered with fallen leaves and the occasional weed. On the far edge of the clearing, a tiny hillock abuts the stream. Atop this rise, two large boulders lay heaped against one another, pressing against a large oak tree that protrudes at an angle over the stream. From a shadowy rift between the rocks emerges a large, brown-coated panther. The cat moves to the base of the rise and bares its fangs. It issues a long, low roar and coils it body low to the ground, the tip of its tail twitching.

This clearing and the den amid the rocks serve as the lair of a mated pair of panthers. Jazzad has befriended the cats, and they pay him no mind. Those who heed the warning growl of the male are allowed to leave unmolested. Those who ignore it, stay where they are, or proceed farther into the clearing are attacked. The panther is aware of the quicksand in the clearing (see **Trap** below) and does not enter it, ignoring opponents trapped by it. The panther can easily leap the quicksand and does so to engage opponents on the far side.

If PCs were pursuing Jazzad to this location, he is hiding amid the brush to the north of the clearing. PCs who attempt to locate him must make a successful Spot check opposed by Jazzad's Hide check. Jazzad attempts to observe how intruders fare against the panther. If it becomes apparent that they are about to defeat the animal, Jazzad aids the creature by casting *entangle* or entering into the fray as described in area **H1**. In the event that he needs to flee, Jazzad leaps into the stream and swims away.

Creatures (EL 2, or 4 if both panthers must be overcome): Unless the PCs do something to directly threaten the den, only the male attacks. The female panther remains inside to protect the pair's two kittens and fights only if intruders attempt to force their way in. In such a case, she fights with a +2 circumstance bonus to all attack and damage rolls while protecting the den. The two lion kittens are young and pose no threat.

Panthers (2): hp 24 (male), 20 (female); *Monster Manual*, page 198 (leopard).

Trap (EL 1): This clearing contains a patch of quicksand. It is treated exactly like the quicksand in area **H2**.

I. Fallen Monuments.

The grasslands ahead are interrupted by a huge pile of worked stones. The stones form a huge pedestal upon which two boulders once stood. One of these has fallen, tearing away a portion of the pedestal and leaving only a cascade of broken rubble. The remaining boulder towers over 15 feet high and has been worked to resemble a humanoid figure with a large head. Because the workmanship is poor and the entire structure is pitted, it is unclear what kind of creature the statue once depicted.

This ancient monument was built centuries ago by unknown hands. The workmanship is crude, and even close inspection by a dwarven stonesmith yields no clue as to its origin. However, PCs who make a successful Search check (DC 20) detect a secret panel in the middle of the southern face of the stone pedestal. Depressing a nearby loose stone causes several heavy blocks to swing upward on pivots, revealing a narrow staircase that winds down to area **I1**. The swivel blocks remain open unless the loose stone is depressed a second time, at which point they lower shut again. The swivel stones cannot be activated from below, so anyone within is trapped should the loose stone be depressed while they are inside.

Swivel Blocks: 8 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 120; Break (DC 35).

I1. Ancient Crypt.

Narrow stairs lead down to a rough-hewn crypt with a 6-foot-high ceiling. The walls are lined with crude stones, several of which have fallen away to reveal the bare earth beyond. Mildew covers a stone sarcophagus. The lid is nowhere to be seen, and its upper edges have begun to crumble.

Two narrow tunnels exit the crypt on the far side of the room, one to the south and the other to the east. A small niche occupies the far wall opposite the stairs.

Thick black mildew (harmless) coats the sides of the sarcophagus and most of the inside, which is otherwise empty. PCs who check the floor and succeed at a Search check (DC 20) notice a fresh footprint. A successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) confirms that it is a goblin print. Those who have the Track feat can attempt to follow the trail by making a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 24), though this proves difficult as it has been several weeks and the trail crosses back and forth over itself. This trail was left by Herruk when he first discovered this place. Herruk proceeded along the north face of the sarcophagus to the niche, where he freed the quasit Veshra. The two proceeded to area **I2** where they harvested some "flaming crazies" before retracing their steps and exiting the crypt. Veshra left no prints, as he rode on Herruk's shoulder the entire time.

The niche contains nothing except a jet-black stone carved to resemble a 3 ft. × 3 ft. × 3 ft. cube. The stone is partially sunk into the floor and weighs 1,200 lbs. Upon its upper surface, rendered in chalk and powdered bone, is a magic circle that has been partially rubbed away. This symbol once imprisoned the quasit Veshra, but the demon convinced Herruk to release him. Veshra took a liking to the goblin witchdoctor and immediately bent him to his will, intending to use him as a tool to spread evil.

I2. Mushroom Garden.

This room reeks of decay. The slimy floor is covered with molds, mushrooms, and other underground fungi with the occasional small puddle of dark water peeking through. In spite of the foul smell and grunge, here and there a brightly colored orange or blue mushroom stands out.

This chamber holds the key to Jazzad's madness. Growing amid the numerous common fungi here are seven bright orange mushrooms known as "flaming crazies." It was from one of these mushrooms that Veshra and Herruk brewed the poison that caused Jazzad's insanity and from which Ryan Tollocke (or any PC with the Alchemy skill) can brew the antidote. In their present state, the flaming crazies are less potent but still dangerous. Ingesting even a portion of one deals 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage unless a Fortitude save succeeds (DC 11). One minute later, another Fortitude save (DC 11) is required to avoid 2d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage. Humanoids whose Wisdom scores drop below 3 become insane and remain so until the poison's antidote is administered or a *heal* spell is cast. The symptoms of madness vary and can be determined by the DM. Regardless, lost Wisdom points return at the usual rate (one per day, or two per day of rest).

Treasure: Though most of the fungi in this chamber is both harmless and worthless, there are five blue mushrooms known at "sapphire caps." These rare mushrooms are magical in nature, providing a +2 resistance bonus to saving throws for 1 day. Each mushroom can be sold to an herbalist (such as Ryan) for up to 100 gp.

I3. Centipedes' Lair.

This chamber is mostly obscured by thick cobwebs. What can be seen of the floor is covered by dirt and other jumbled objects. A steady plop of dripping water echoes off the walls. Just inside the chamber lies a mound of filth, a bare armbone protruding from it into the passageway.

This room holds two monstrous centipedes. These vermin attack intruders on sight and don't hesitate to pursue fleeing prey. Amid the debris on the floor can be found the **Treasure**.

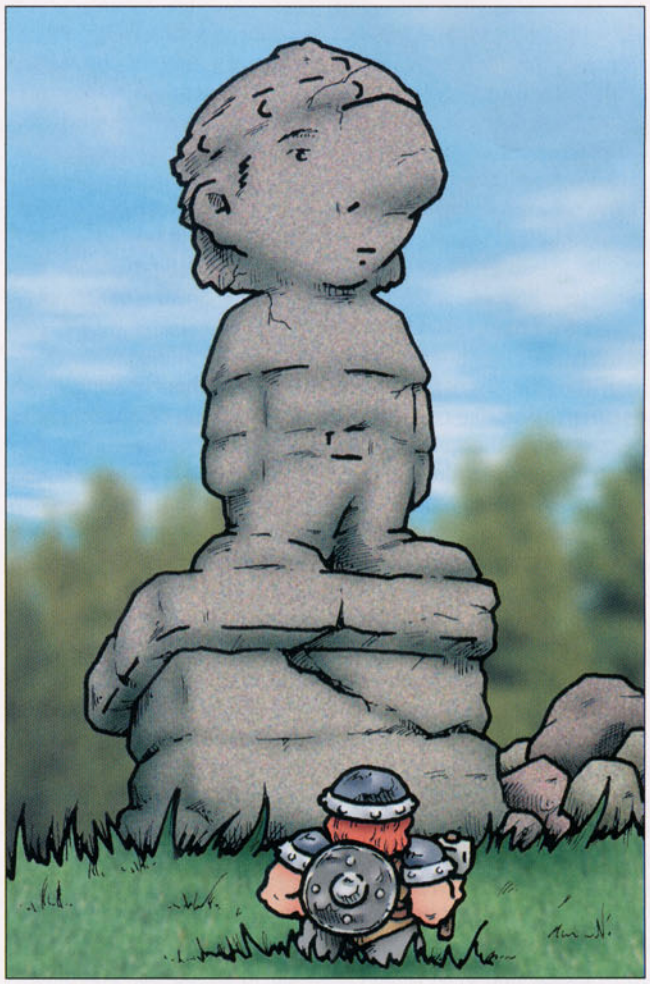
Creatures (EL 2): The two 8-foot-long centipedes cling to the shadows near the ceiling. At night, they exit the chamber through a narrow, 2-foot-diameter tunnel in the ceiling, emerging over 100 yards northeast in the grasslands to hunt.

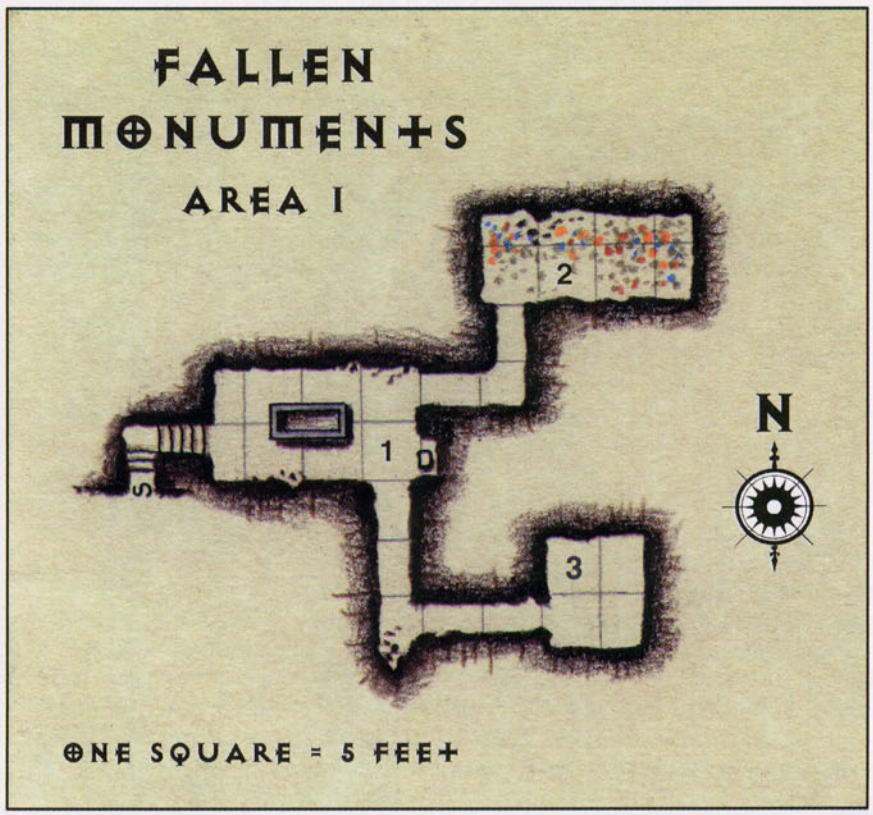
Large Monstrous Centipedes (2): hp 13, 12; *Monster Manual*, page 208.

Treasure: Those who spend at least 10 minutes searching through the debris find the following objects: numerous animal and goblin bones, three pearls (10 gp each), a masterwork short sword in a rotting leather sheath, and a leather pouch (containing 42 sp, 18 gp, and a gold signet ring worth 50 gp).

J. Hidden Village of the Slithering Snails.

Beyond the stream and the trees, nestled in the shadowy recesses of a large crook in the rock formation, squats a collection of primitive huts. Rock walls overshadow the entire area, giving the impression of a vast, shallow cave. A





few hardy trees and bushes surround the huts. The entire place is protected by a narrow trench dug in the earth before the huts, stretching across the indention in the rock formation. Across this trench, partially obscuring the huts, stand a series of boulders. A long wooden plank leans against one of them. The area in front of the trench has been cleared of brush within 50 feet, with even twigs and fallen leaves having been swept up into several separate piles.

Suddenly a goblin head pops up from behind one of the boulders and scans the area for a few moments before disappearing back behind it.

If the PCs discover the goblin village without making much noise or otherwise causing a scene, they have normal chances of surprising the goblins. This is particularly true if they discover the village during the day, when the goblins are less active. To take advantage of this, PCs must study the terrain and design a plan of attack. Rushing the village across the open space between the woods and the trench sounds the alarm. In addition to the goblin mentioned in the boxed text above, another sentry watches from a ledge overlooking the village (area J5). Once the alarm is sounded, all male goblins take up defensive positions and await the enemy (see **Tactics** below).

The village itself consists of four squat huts constructed from thin logs covered with a patchwork of animal hides. Each is roofed with a thick covering of cured reeds and leaves over a framework of wooden poles. Aside from the numerous small holes and tears in the huts, each has but one entrance: a 3-foot-high doorway blocked by a hanging mat of animal skins. All doorways face into the center of the village. Aside from its slightly larger size, Herruk's hut (area J4) is outwardly identical to the others.

The rest of the village consists of bare earth, with only the few sparse bushes and the areas immediately surrounding the tree trunks containing any patches of wild grass or weeds. All other vegetation has been cleared away and swept into one of four piles, three of which conceal pits (see **Trap** below). Three piles exist outside the village, one of which conceals a pit.

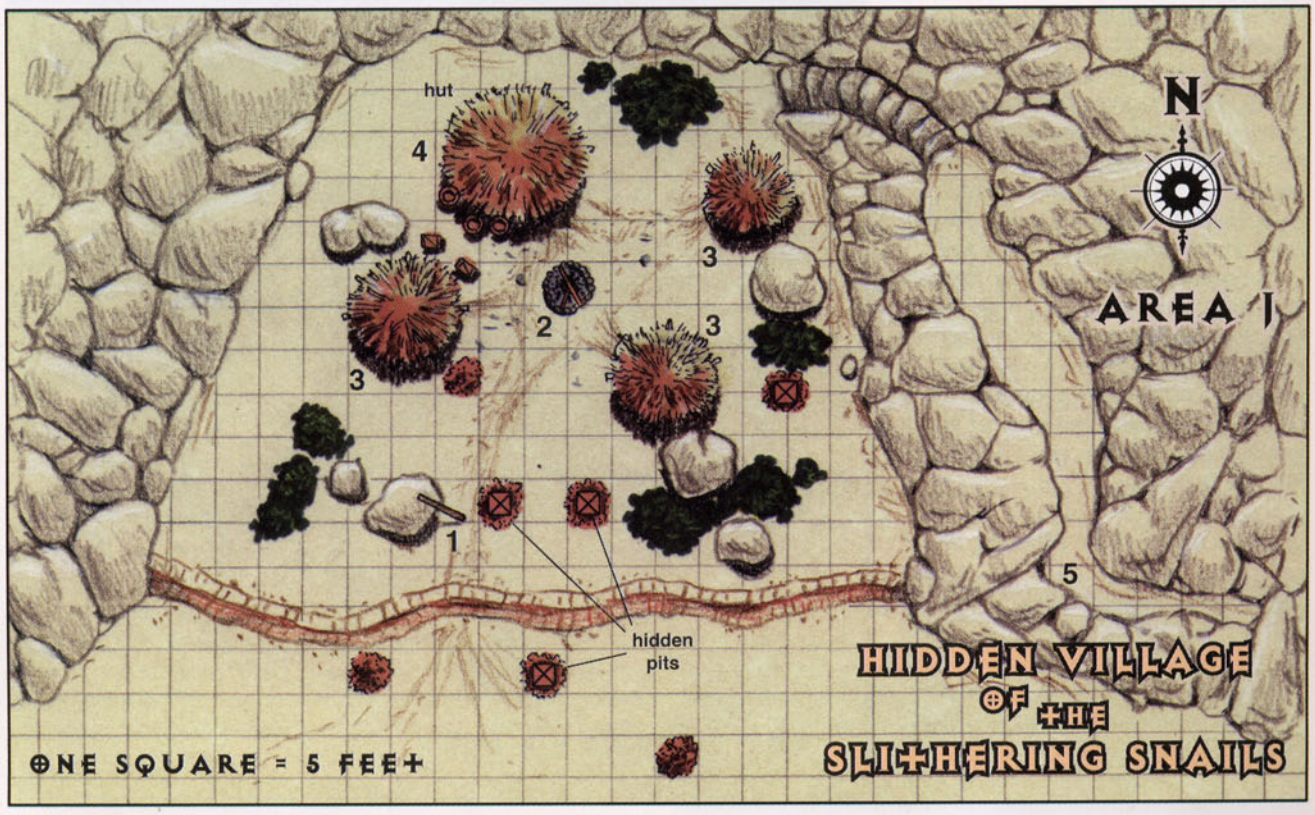
Trap (EL 1 per pit): As mentioned above, there are four pits dug about the village and concealed with piles of leaves (their positions are marked on the map below). Other than the fact that they are covered with leaf piles, they are the same as those described at area B.

10-foot-deep Spiked Pits (4): CR 1; 1d6 points of damage, +2 melee (1d4 wooden stakes for 1d3 points of damage per successful hit); Reflex save avoids (DC 20); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 10).

Creatures (EL 6, or 3 if Agrand's band is away): Although there are a total of 22 goblins in the village other than Herruk, only eight are males. The ten females and four children withdraw to the common huts (area J3) at the first hint of danger.

Two goblin warriors are always posted at area J1, while one is always watching from area J5. If the alarm is sounded during the day, it takes 3 rounds for the warriors to rouse themselves, grab their weapons, and prepare for battle (see **Tactics** below for the village's defense plan). If the village is taken by surprise, all warriors not on active guard duty are unarmed, though their shields and clubs are within reach. All such warriors are caught either sleeping in one of the huts (area J3) or lounging about the central living area (area J2).

If the village is attacked during the evening or at night, all warriors are armed. However, unless they suspect an imminent attack, there is a 40% chance that Agrand and three of the warriors are out hunting or perhaps harassing the PCs (see **Development**). Regardless of the number of warriors present,



once the alarm is sounded, they take up their defensive positions in 2 rounds.

Male Goblins (7): CR 1/2; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 1d8; hp 4 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 small shield, +3 studded leather armor); Atk +1 melee (1d6-1, club); or +2 ranged (1d2 plus poison, blowgun); SA poisoned darts; SQ war paint, darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +5, Listen +1, Move Silently +3, Spot +1. *Feat:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (blowgun).

SA—Poisoned Dart (Ex): The goblins of the Slithering Snail tribe hunt using blowguns (Dmg 1d2/crit ×2; Range 10 ft., 50 ft. max.; Weight 1 pound). Each dart is coated with a poison that Herruk brews using the blue snails of the valley. The poison must be injected or ingested to be effective: Fortitude save (DC 12) negates; initial damage 1d4 temporary points of Dexterity, secondary damage unconsciousness for 1d6 hours. (For more information on blowguns, see "The Right Tool for the Job" by Andy Collins in *Dragon Magazine* #275.)

SQ—War Paint (Ex): All warriors of the Slithering Snail tribe paint their faces with a blue war paint brewed from a mixture of blue snails and other herbs from the valley. Unfortunately for the goblins, this paint mixture is mildly toxic, and long-term exposure causes slight lethargy, dulling motor skills and reflexes; all goblin warriors suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to Dexterity, which is already factored in to their statistics.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, small wooden shield, club, 3-foot-long long blowgun, 10 blowgun darts, leather pouch containing worthless "treasures" (mangy animal pelts, stone hunting knives, shiny rocks, animal bones, and so forth).

Agrand, Male Goblin Rog2: CR 2; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 2d6; hp 10; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Atk +2 melee (1d4+1/crit 19-20, dagger); or +3 ranged (1d2 plus poison, blowgun); SA poison darts, sneak attack +1d6; SQ war paint, evasion, darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills: Appraise +1, Balance +3*, Climb +2*, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Escape Artist +4*, Handle Animal +0, Hide +6*, Jump +2*, Listen +2, Move Silently +5*, Pick Pockets +3*, Profession (hunter) +3, Search +2, Spot +3, Swim +2*, Wilderness Lore +3. *Feat:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (blowgun). *These skill modifiers include the -1 armor check penalty for wearing studded leather armor.

SA—Poisoned Dart (Ex): See above for details.

SQ—War Paint (Ex): See above for details.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, 3-foot-long blowgun, 10 blowgun darts, dagger, leather boots, 25-foot-long rope, leather pouch containing two pearls (10 gp each), 12 cp, 7 sp, and a carved wooden pipe (8 gp).

Description: Agrand is an older warrior with slightly wrinkled features and graying hair. He otherwise appears as other members of the tribe.

Tactics: If the goblin sentries spot anyone approaching the village, they shout warnings that prompt goblins in the village to take up pre-determined defense positions. The guards at area **J1** remain where they are, using their blowguns from behind the rocks (+7 cover bonus to AC and +3 cover bonus to Reflex saves) to keep attackers from crossing the trench. If opponents cross the trench and close to melee, these guards fight with clubs. If outnumbered 2-to-1 in melee, they attempt to flee into the center of the village (area **J2**). All other goblin warriors, including Agrand (if present) and the sentry from area **J5**, take up positions in the eastern end of area **J2** and ready their blowguns, using the huts has three-quarters cover against ranged attacks. They wait for attackers to enter area **J2** before launching a volley of poison darts and then ready their clubs. In addition, one goblin stands behind the dire rat cage and opens it as soon as enemies enter the area. All goblin warriors fight to the last man to protect their village while Herruk is alive. See area **J4** for Herruk's actions should the village come under attack.

Development: If the village is attacked by the PCs while Agrand and his warriors are out hunting, they return 1d4 hours later. If they find that the PCs have defeated Herruk and sacked the village, they attempt to gather the females and children who remain and flee into the Dim Forest's interior (this is also the case if all the males are slain and the females are allowed to live). If the PCs have been repulsed, however, Agrand and his warriors attempt to find and harry them. If they locate the PCs' camp, they attempt to ambush them as described in the "Random Encounters" sidebar. Agrand and his warriors practice hit-and-run tactics, sweeping through the enemy camp after a volley of blowgun darts to grab loose items and equipment before fleeing back into the trees.

J1. Guard Post and Trench. Two male goblins are stationed here behind boulders, serving as a lookouts. Leaning against one boulder is a 7-foot-long, 3-foot-wide wooden plank that the goblins use to cross the trench. The plank can support no more than 100 pounds. PCs can jump over the trench, as it is only 5 feet wide; see the Jump skill description in the *Player's Handbook* for details. The trench is 10 feet deep, and those who fall in take 1d6 points of damage. Feel free to add spikes to the trench to make it more dangerous, if you like.

J2. Central Living Space. This is the heart of the village. The central area is occupied by a large firepit with a series of wooden braces hanging over it for cooking. The fire is never lit during the day but is always lit an hour after dark until midnight. In addition to the firepit, the area houses several wooden barrels, crates, and a crudely cobbled wooden cage holding three dire rats. Most of the crates and barrels are stolen from Hulvin. The rest of the area is littered with discarded junk, old bones, and other refuse.

Creatures (EL 1): These rats are poorly treated by the goblins, making them mean-spirited. During an attack, one goblin stands behind the cage and releases the rats as soon as enemies enter this area. The rats attack those nearest them when released, fighting to the death and fleeing only if confronted by open flame.

Dire Rats (3): hp 5 each; *Monster Manual,* page 56.

J3. Communal Huts. Each of these huts contains an assortment of sleeping pallets, animal skins, and numerous other living utensils. All three huts are filthy and reek of foul odors. During an attack, all goblin females and children cower silently within these huts. If discovered, they begin a continuous wail of despair, broken only by the occasional plea for mercy. If spared, they agree to flee the valley and never return.

Note: Good-aligned PCs who torture or kill helpless goblins should not receive any XPs for the attack on the village.

J4. Herruk's Hut. This squalid hut stinks even worse than the others, with the scents of burnt animal fats and potent herbs commingling with the unpleasant odors of the typical goblin residence. The hut is crowded with an assortment of barrels, crates, bags, wooden pots, and other containers. Most of these contain rotting plants, bones, animal entrails, dead insects, and a vast array of similar objects. A thorough search of the place (requiring 10 minutes) turns up a leather sack containing the tribe's **Treasure.**

Herruk's hut is the seat of his power and the place where he performs his magic and brews the various poisons used by the tribe. Other than Herruk, no one except Veshra is allowed inside. In fact, none of the other goblins know that the quasit is anything more than a big spider; Herruk tells them that the spider is his familiar. Since both are cowards at heart, Herruk and Veshra remain inside the hut during an attack. Under no circumstances do they emerge from the hut to aid the rest of the tribe.

Creatures (EL 4): Herruk is a wily old witchdoctor who has always been somewhat eccentric, insisting on long, intricate rituals for everything he does. Fueled by the whispers of the quasit in his ear, his recent behavior has become even more bizarre, with the old coot talking to himself and lording about in triumph. He intends to step up raids on Hulvin, but first he insists the warriors capture the lunatic ranger so they can finish the job they began by ambushing him. It is clear to the other goblins that Herruk's plan to attack Hulvin could devastate the tribe, but they fear confronting the sorcerer and his new "familiar."

Herruk, Male Goblin Sor3: CR 3; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 3d4; hp 9; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+1 size, +1 Dex); Atk -1 melee (1d6-2, bone club); or +2 ranged (1d2 plus poison, blowgun); SA poisoned darts; SQ war paint, darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 7, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Alchemy +8, Concentration +6, Craft (blowgun) +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +3. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (blowgun). Languages: Common, Goblin.

SA—Poison Dart (Ex): Herruk coats his darts with a poison brewed from "flaming crazies" (see area **I2**). PCs stuck by a poisoned dart must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 13) or suffer the effects: initial damage 1d6 points of temporary Wisdom, secondary damage 2d6 points of temporary Wisdom. A PC whose Wisdom score drops below 3 is struck mad and remains so until an antidote is administered or a *heal* spell is cast. The symptoms of madness vary; however, a PC afflicted with madness becomes an NPC under the DM's control until the malady is cured.

SQ—War Paint (Ex): See above for details.

Spells (6/6, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, detect poison, mage hand, mending, read magic;* 1st—*hypnotism, ray of enfeeblement, summon monster I.*

Possessions: Ragged animal-pelt clothing, headdress of raven feathers with several eagle feathers thrown in for color, bone club, leather belt, leather boots, 3-foot-long blowgun, 8 blowgun darts, vial of "flaming crazies" mushroom poison (enough to coat 20 darts or one dagger blade), small sack containing 13 cp, 8 sp, five pearls (10 gp each), spell components, and assorted trinkets (shrubs, mushrooms, clay beads, animal teeth, and so forth).

Description: Everything about Herruk looks bent, gnarled, and worn. He is completely bald but hides this by wearing his feathered headdress. His face is covered with blue war paint.

Veshra is a twisted little creature typical of his kind, relishing the opportunity to spread evil and wanton destruction to all creatures of the Prime Material plane. Though he has been on this plane for centuries, most of that time was spent as either a slave or prisoner. For once, he is his own master, and he intends to enjoy manipulating the weak-minded goblins to the fullest.

Veshra the Quasit: hp 15; *Monster Manual,* page 41.

Tactics: Herruk has hollowed out several spy holes just above the row of barrels placed against the south wall of his hut. Using these holes, he supports the tribal defense of the village by casting his spells on enemies who reach the central living space (area **J2**). His favorite spells in such a situation are *summon monster I* and *ray of enfeeblement,* but he casts *daze* or *mage hand* if the opportunity rises. Only if his spells are exhausted does he resort to using his blowgun. Opponents who storm into the hut force him to cast aside the blowgun and cast *hypnotism,* which he hopes will hold his foes in thrall while he makes good his escape. If the spell fails, Herruk fights with his club, but even in such close quarters he attempts to cast spells if he has any remaining, alternating between melee attacks and spells for as long as possible. He refuses to surrender and fights until killed or otherwise subdued.

Veshra remains motionless on Herruk's shoulder, using his powers to identify which PCs radiate magic or good and mentally urging Herruk to attack these targets. If opponents enter the hut and force Herruk into melee, Veshra turns invisible and watches, not really caring who wins. Only if it becomes obvious that all is lost does he use his *fear* ability, as this affects all creatures within 30 feet, including Herruk and any remaining goblins. Should Herruk be defeated, Veshra scuttles out of the hut using one of the numerous holes and attempts to flee. Only if trapped and confronted by PCs does he revert to his true form and attack.

Treasure: The tribe's treasure consists of 312 cp, 157 sp, 40 gp, and a pair of tarnished silver chalices (15 gp each).

J5. Lookout Point. A rough trail with worked stone steps winds up the sheer face of the rock formation. The narrow path ends at a natural ledge some 40 feet above the ground. One goblin sentry watches the southern approaches to the village.

K. Switchback Trail. The trail ascends the cliff face via a series of steep switchbacks before continuing on into the forest proper. This trail, though overgrown in places, is safe to use.

Concluding the Adventure

Should the PCs return to Hulvin with Jazzad in tow, Ryan is overjoyed to see his friend alive. This joy is dampened by the ranger's madness, but fortunately, it takes the herbalist only a short time to determine the cause. Ryan is familiar with "flaming crazies" and their effects, but unless the PCs brought back a sample of the poison or one of the deadly mushrooms, he is unable to brew the antidote—a task requiring a successful Alchemy check (DC 25). (An alchemist with the proper ingredients and a lab can take 20 on this check. In Ryan's case, that gives him exactly what he needs to successfully create the antidote.) If this is the case, Ryan asks that they return to the Valley of the Snails and procure the necessary samples while he keeps his friend safely sedated. If one or more of the PCs have also succumbed to the madness, Ryan promises to give them the antidote as well. Ryan attempts to convince the PCs to return for the poison as an extension of their original mission, but if they need further incentive, he promises them whatever potions he has not already agreed to give them (or promises to brew addition ones). If the PCs agreed to perform the quest without reward, he insists that they take their choice of three potions anyway. In addition, he asks that they stay at his home for a couple days, as Jazzad needs to rest from his ordeal and would certainly wish to thank them personally. If they agree, Jazzad thanks them after sleeping for several days and insists they keep his personal treasure if they recovered it from area **H2** (though he asks that his book be returned). If they did not recover this treasure, he promises them the magical dagger from the hoard as a reward for saving him (they'll have to be patient though, as Jazzad is in no condition to return for it for at least several weeks). Either way, the PCs have made two friends, and both are happy to assist the PCs as best they can in the future.

There are several possibilities for new adventures in and around the Valley of the Snails. Area **E2** provides the perfect entrance into the deeper regions of the Underdark should you wish to steer the campaign in this direction. In addition, should either Herruk or Veshra escape alive, both can serve as reoccurring villains. Though Herruk would certainly wish revenge on those who ruin his plans, Veshra is perhaps best suited to this role. The demon might be intrigued with these heroes who have thwarted his diabolical scheme, latching onto them. Rather than attempting to attack them directly, he attempts to stalk them invisibly, using his powers to tarnish their reputation and otherwise harass them. In such a case, the PCs might have their hands full just trying to figure out the true cause of their misfortune. Ω

Jason dedicates this adventure to his gaming group: Greg, Morgan, Marjorie, Adam, Doug, Curtis, Ariel, Frank, and Jack. This is his fourth appearance in DUNGEON Magazine.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL CHART

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (EL) for all of the encounters in "Valley of the Snails."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
–	Wolves (3)	3
–	Boar (1)	2
–	Panther (1)	2
–	Medium-size Tree Viper (1)	1
B	Willy the Fox	1/3
	10-foot-deep Spiked Pits (3)	1 ea.
C	Gromph the Satyr	2
E3	Darkmantle (1)	1
	Rockfall	1
E4	Bat Swarm	1/3
G	Grall the Blink Dog	2
	Poisonous Blue Snails	1/3
H1	Jazzad, Male Human Rgr5	5
H2	Quicksand	1
H4	Panthers (2)	2 ea.
	Quicksand	1
I3	Large Monstrous Centipedes (2)	2
J	10-foot-deep Spiked Pits (4)	1 ea.
	Male Goblins (7)	4
	Agrand, Male Goblin Rog2	+1
J2	Dire Rats (3)	1
J4	Herruk, Male Goblin Sor3	3
	Veshra the Quasit	+1

The Shalm's Dark Song

Time To Pay the Piper

by Tito Leati

artwork by Chuck Lukacs • cartography by Tito Leati

"The Shalm's Dark Song" is a D&D Side Trek designed for four 5th-level player characters (PCs). It can take place in any sparsely settled area of your campaign. The presence of a bard in the party is recommended but not required. The adventure can be easily adapted for stronger or weaker PCs by increasing or reducing the number and power of the opponents, as noted in the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar.

Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs learn about a secluded shrine of Obad-Hai (the Shalm) visited by travelers seeking advice or guidance. Of late, small bands of pilgrims and adventurers visiting the shrine have failed to return, and locals fear that monsters have overrun the shrine. If the PCs take an interest in the matter, they are told about the shrine's legendary origins and invited to find out what happened to the missing people. When the PCs reach the shrine, they face a band of creatures led by a tiefling bard/cleric of Obad-Hai named Bemdroch.

Adventure Background

Every legend has its humble beginnings. About a century ago, Bogren Brutebasher—a heroic ranger—was just a poor peasant boy who tilled a tiny piece of land at the foot of the Horat Hills. An orphan from the early years of his childhood, Bogren grew up by his own wits, becoming a strong, brave, and peaceful youth. At eighteen, the boy lived in a wooden cottage built with his own hands. One day, a wandering athach named Theelsaz attacked a nearby village, killing many and blackmailing the survivors so that they would deliver all their riches in exchange for their lives. The athach made its lair in the Horat Hills, waiting for the reply of his terrified victims.

A group of local adventurers, including a good cleric of Obad-Hai named Pimaris, banded together to challenge the athach, asking for the help of humble and unassuming villagers and farmers. When they found Bogren, the boy was picking mushrooms under a tall ash, undisturbed by the closeness of the athach. When asked whether he would join them against Theelsaz, the boy was undecided, for he considered the three-armed giant "just another monster" dwelling in the Horat Hills. Annoyed by Bogren's selfishness and phlegmatic nature, the desperate adventurers taunted him with being a coward. This provocation had a surprising effect on the proud boy, who pointed his finger toward the tree over his head and said, "I will throw my hoe among the branches of this ash. If it falls back to the ground, you will leave me alone. Otherwise, I will not be a farmer anymore, but an adventurer like you instead." Bogren tossed the hoe, which stuck in the ash's foliage. It is common belief that the Shalm, the god of nature himself, animated the tree branches to catch the tool. (In fact, Pimaris used a control plants spell to "catch" the hoe.) "So be it," said Bogren. "I will come back here only when the hoe falls down." Thus began the career of a great hero and the downfall of an wicked giant. Theelsaz was killed with the boy's help just three days later.

In the following years, Bogren became a famous adventurer and a slayer of evil giants. He never came back to visit his old property and died in a distant land fighting some colossal beast. The ash that held up his hoe, however, became a holy tree. Under the guidance of Pimaris, the local population built a shrine to Obad-Hai to celebrate the Theelsaz's defeat. The ash, enclosed in a courtyard, was thought to be an oracle of the Shalm. The shrine, referred to by locals as Ash Temple, served as Pimaris's residence. His adventuring career over, he offered wisdom and healing to all of the shrine's visitors.

After Pimaris's death, four priests of Obad-Hai took care of Ash Temple in succession. These neutral clerics, however, were not as altruistic as their predecessor, and the shrine became less popular, while the uncultivated fields around it turned wild again. The last of these priests, Cuiren, died about six months ago. Nowadays, Ash Temple has been almost forgotten by people living nearby, and only a few, eager individuals undertake the journey to visit its keeper and the Shalm's oracle. What nobody knows is that Cuiren has been replaced by a tiefling bard/cleric named Bemdroch, who upholds the most savage and cruel aspects of the Shalm's cult.

Since his arrival, Bemdroch has been patiently waiting for the rare pilgrims who still visit Ash Temple, capturing them with the help of Hoograg, an ogre, and sacrificing them to avenge civilization's age-old interference with nature's infallible order.

Beginning the Adventure

The adventure begins in the Horat Hills (feel free to rename these hills to better suit your home campaign). The PCs hear rumors about Ash Temple. Possible motivations for visiting the shrine include the following:

- The PCs seek an oracle (or a source of Divination spells) to gain special knowledge about something or someone in your campaign.
- The PCs are hired to find out what happened to a group of pilgrims (a dozen male and female peasants) who did not return from their trip to Ash Temple. The last group of travelers to return from the shrine did so six months ago, claiming that an old human cleric named Cuiren ran the place.
- The heroes learn that Hoograg, a cruel and cunning ogre, lives in the nearby hills. Hoograg specializes in stealing horses and clobbering peasants, and only a lucky few have survived his sneaky attacks. This ogre, people say, has a greenish skin and exudes a particularly foul smell. The heroes are asked to kill Hoograg and bring back his head for 750 gold pieces or a magic potion of equal value.
- The PCs simply stumble on the mysterious shrine during a trip in the wilderness.

After learning of Ash Temple, the PCs can interact with the people living near the shrine to reconstruct the adventure background. If a PC makes a successful bardic knowledge or Gather Information check (DC 20 for both), she hears tales of Bogren and his adventurous life. Otherwise, the heroes gain only vague information about Bogren, Theelsaz, and Pimaris, perhaps missing the names and picking up some falsehoods. At your discretion, the adventure hook regarding Hoograg can be just a piece of information that the heroes pick up with a DC 10 Gather Information check.

Reaching the Shrine

The locals can provide directions to Ash Temple so the PCs won't lose their way. From the nearest settlement, the heroes must travel through 20 miles of woods, hillocks, and overgrown fields. You should check for wandering monsters each hour, using the "Random Encounters" table at the end of the adventure (page 135). When the PCs finally find the shrine, read or paraphrase the following description, which assumes that the PCs arrive at Ash Temple during the day and approach the building from the south:

> Ash Temple stands atop a stone plinth on a low hillock. The walls of the shrine are made of timber. The entrance is set into a portico supported by six wooden pillars. The lintel that runs over the leafy capitals of the pillars is decorated with a strip of clay friezes depicting monstrous humanoids, tangled plants, and sylvan creatures. The porch is surmounted by a triangular pediment and covered by a roof of wooden shingles, whose texture resembles the surface of a giant pinecone. The pediment frames a triangular bas-relief featuring a large mask of Obad-Hai in the middle, a grotesque three-armed giant on the right, and a young peasant-boy armed with a sling on the right. A lattice of roots and vines drapes the building here and there.

The floors of the shrine are paved with stone tiles, but the remaining structure is masterfully built of wood.

The shrine is especially vulnerable to fire; in addition to taking damage from fire-based attacks, the shrine has a 5% chance per point of damage of catching fire. (Thus, a *fireball* that deals 20 points of damage to the shrine has a 100% chance of starting a fire.) If this happens and the PCs do not take immediate steps to douse the flames, the building burns down in a matter of minutes (an offense to Obad-Hai; see "Concluding the

Adventure"). The portal under the main pediment is the only entrance at ground level (area 1). Flying or climbing PCs can gain access through the courtyard (area 3). Thanks to the creeping plants that cover most of the structure, the outer walls of the courtyard can be scaled easily with a Climb check (DC 10). However, any attempt to scale the walls from outside has a 20% chance of provoking an assassin vine (see **Creature** below).

Creature (EL 3): Bemdroch used his power over plants (see below) to command this monster, which now prowls the vegetation-covered outer walls of the shrine's courtyard.

Assassin Vine (1): hp 37; *Monster Manual,* page 20.

Ash Temple

Refer to the map of Ash Temple for the following encounters.

1. Entrance. A 10-foot-wide portal framed by an inlaid border is set under the frontal porch of the shrine. Over the porch, the clay mask of Obad-Hai carved in the pediment stares forward with an imperturbable expression.

Creatures (EL 4): Two dire weasels loyal to Bemdroch crouch near the pillars. (Bemdroch recruited the weasels using his *animal friendship* domain power.) At the first sign of intruders, the weasels rush to areas 3 and 4 to warn Hoograg and Bemdroch.

Dire Weasels (2): hp 14, 16; *Monster Manual,* page 56.

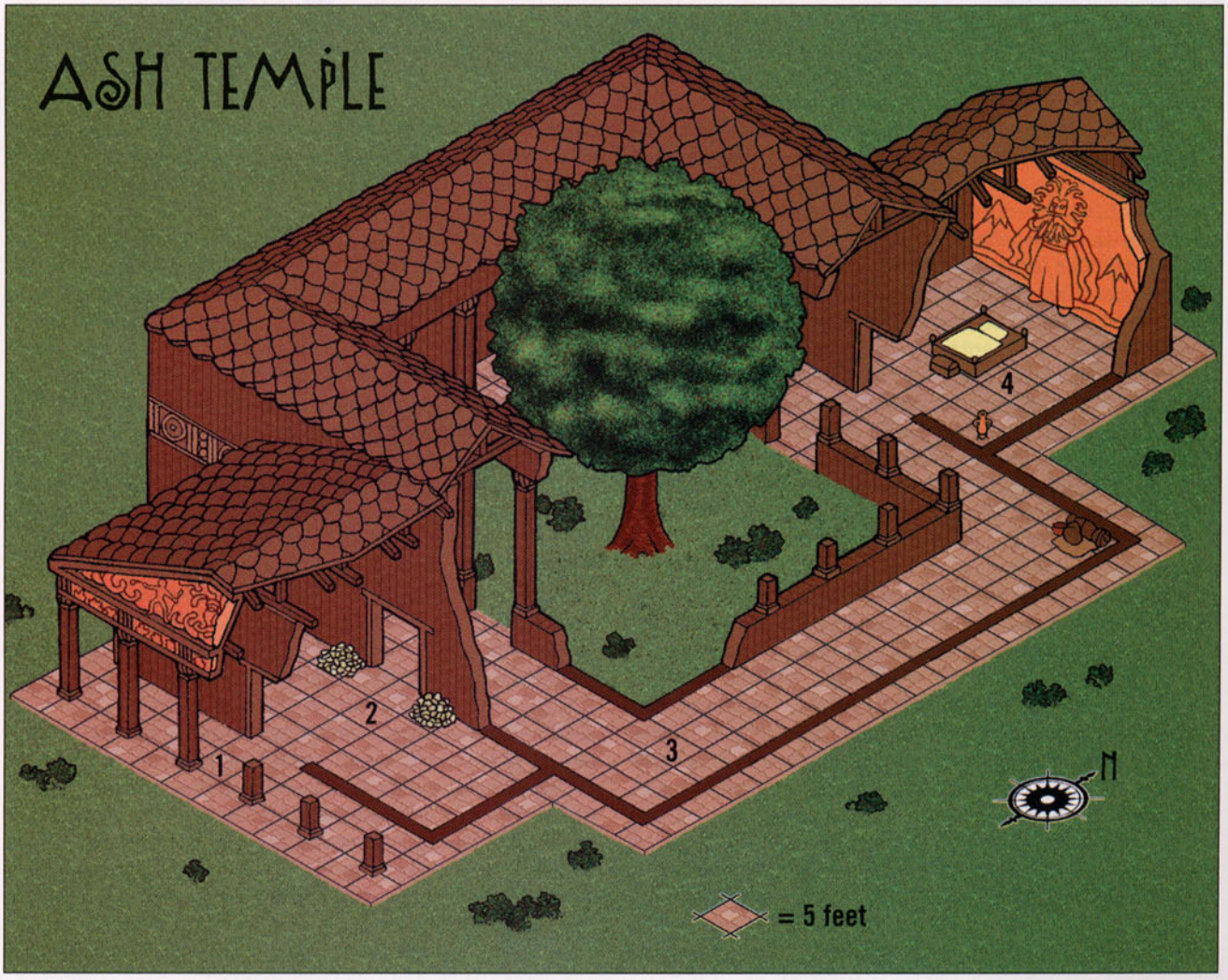
Tactics: If the weasels warn Bemdroch and Hoograg about intruders, the tiefling and ogre stand by the ash tree in the sacred courtyard (area 3). The dire weasels skulk about the colonnade, using their Hide and Move Silently skills to surprise and possibly flank PCs who threaten their master.

For Hoograg's and Bemdroch's tactics, refer to area 3.

2. Atrium.

The entrance leads to a 20-foot-high rectangular space dominated by the shapes of four roof-supporting trusses. A portal on the north wall opens to an overgrown courtyard surrounded by a tall colonnade. Two heaps of human bones flank the passage to the courtyard. The wooden walls of this room are studded with hundreds of metal plaques blackened by age. The plaques come in various sizes and shapes. Aside from minor differences, they are skillful carvings of an ash tree or facial portraits of Obad-Hai.

The north doorway leads to area 3. Rubbing the surface of the blackened plaques reveals the glitter of solid silver. The plaques are votive offerings to Obad-Hai, left decades ago when the pilgrims to the shrine were much more numerous and generous. Working hard with the blade of a knife, a crass



PC can collect up to 400 gp worth of silver in this room. Doing so would be a direct offense to Obad-Hai (see "Concluding the Adventure" below).

The two heaps of human bones near to the north passage are the remains of a dozen victims, recently stripped of the flesh by Hoograg the ogre. When the PCs enter this room, the heaped bones spring up and form two shambling, clattering bone constructs that attack immediately.

Creatures (EL 5): Bemdroch created the bone constructs with a lengthy and secret ritual. They fight like Large animated objects with hardness 3 but also possess a skeleton's immunities and the Improved Initiative feat. The bone constructs are bound to their place of creation and cannot move more than 30 feet beyond area 2.

Bone Constructs, Large Animated Objects (2): CR 3; Large Construct (8 feet tall); HD 4d10; hp 22 each; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +5 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, slam); SQ construct, hardness 3, cold immunity, take half damage from piercing or slashing weapons; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

3. Sacred Courtyard.

The open sky hangs over this 50-foot-wide courtyard. A 15-foot-wide, 30-foot-high arcade completely encloses the middle of the courtyard, in which stands a single ash tree. Bones and skulls, deliberately entangled in the tree's foliage, bob slowly as the wind sweeps its uppermost branches. More bones and skulls litter the ground near the tree's roots.

The colonnade that surrounds the ash tree casts deep shadows on the courtyard walls. Barely visible from the entrance, a doorway leads to area 4.

Pilgrims visiting the shrine would camp and worship Obad-Hai here, receiving healing and advice from the shrine's resident cleric. With the coming of Bemdroch, however, the shrine has become a place of woe. The bones on the ground and in the ash's foliage belong to the more recent pilgrims—victims of Bemdroch and Hoograg.

If the heroes inspect the tree carefully with a Search check (DC 20, PCs may take 20), they find a rusty hoe entangled in the branches. The hoe can be freed with magic (*control plants, mage hand, telekinesis*) or by a PC whose feet are not touching the ground. (Note that climbing the tree requires a DC 10 Climb check.) When the hoe falls or is removed from the tree, the ghost of Bogren Brutebasher manifests in the courtyard (see "Concluding the Adventure" for details).

Hoograg's bedroll, made of filthy animal skins, lies on the northeast corner of the arcade, near an empty copper pot (10 gp) and a sack of rye.

Creatures (EL 7 for Bemdroch, 5 for Hoograg, 9 for both): If alerted by the dire weasels in area 1, the tiefling and ogre wait here for their final battle with the heroes. If the PCs reach the courtyard undetected, Bemdroch is in area 4 and Hoograg is sleeping on his animal skins.

Bemdroch is a lean tiefling with cloven feet, curly hair, and black eyes. He often sports a disturbing smile inspired by his evil personality and hateful purposes. Bemdroch wears a simple russet tunic with loose breeches and a short cloak. He carries a dagger and the *shalm of the fifth wind* (see sidebar).

SHALM OF THE FIFTH WIND

The magic of this double flute can be used by a bard whose alignment is compatible with a cleric of Obad-Hai (that is, true neutral or within one step from true neutrality). A bard also requires at least one rank of Perform (shalm) to activate the *shalm*'s spells, each once per day (cast as a Brd7, save DC = bard's Perform check result): *hold person, scare,* and *sound burst.* Playing the *shalm of the fifth wind* is an arcane spell completion action (see *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 175). It draws attack of opportunity and can be disrupted like normal spellcasting. The *shalm*'s effects can be opposed with the countersong ability.

A rogue with the Use Magic Device skill (DC 20, +5 if the rogue is not at least partially neutral) can also activate the *shalm*'s magic. If successful, the Use Magic Device roll becomes the save DC against the *shalm*'s effect.

Caster level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *hold person, scare, sound burst; Market Price:* 15,310 gp; *Weight:* 2 lb.

Hoograg is agile and smart for his race. He is also an athach-ogre crossbreed, possibly a descendant of the infamous athach Theelsaz. He has greenish skin and a vestigial arm sprouting from his chest, barely visible under his leather armor. The ogre has a particular fondness for horse and human flesh and exudes a foul stench (-4 to Hide and Move Silently checks against creatures with the Scent ability).

Bemdroch, Male Tiefling Brd3/Clr4 (Obad-Hai): CR 7; Medium-Size Outsider (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 3d6 (bard) plus 4d8 (cleric); hp 31; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +5 melee (1d4, dagger); SA spells, rebuke undead, *darkness;* SQ fire, cold, and electricity resistance 5; AL NE; SV Fort +7 (including Great Fortitude feat), Ref +6, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +7, Hide +4, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +10 (including Alertness feat), Move Silently +4, Perform (shalm) +9 (including Skill Focus feat), Spot +5 (including Alertness feat), Tumble +5, Spellcraft +3. *Feats:* Alertness, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Perform).

Languages: Common, Elf, Sylvan.

Bard Spells (3/2, save DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*ghost sound, mage hand, resistance;* 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armor.*

Cleric Spells (4/4+1/3+1, save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, guidance, mending, resistance;* 1st—*command, endure elements, entangle*, entropic shield, protection from good;* 2nd—*augury, cure moderate wounds, hold animal*.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Animal (cast *animal friendship* 1/day), Plant (rebuke plant creatures).

Possessions: Dagger, *shalm of the fifth wind,* wooden holy symbol of Obad-Hai, wineskin, pouch containing 25 gp.

Hoograg, Male Ogre Rog3: CR 5; Large Giant (9 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 4d8+8 (ogre) plus 3d6+6 (rogue); hp 41; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural, +2 leather armor); Atk +11 melee (2d6+7, huge greatclub with Weapon Focus feat), or +5 ranged (2d6+5/crit ×3, huge longspear); SA sneak attack (+2d6); SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 6.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure can be made easier or tougher by adjusting it as follows:

1st- to 2nd-level PCs: Make Bemdroch a Brd1/Clr2 who has befriended only one dire weasel. Remove Hoograg's rogue levels). Only one bone construct guards area 2.

3rd- to 4th-level PCs: Make Bemdroch a Brd2/Clr3 and Hoograg a Rog1.

6th- to 7th-level PCs: Make Bemdroch a Brd4/Clr5 and Hoograg a Rog5. Put two assassin vines on the outer walls of the shrine or double the chance of encountering one. Increase the number of dire weasels in area 1 and bone constructs in area 2 to three each.

8th- to 9th-level PCs: Make Bemdroch a Brd5/Clr6 and Hoograg a Rog7. Put three assassin vines on the shrine walls, four dire weasels in area 1, and four bone constructs in area 2. You can also enlarge the bone constructs to Huge size if the characters are especially well-equipped.

When scaling the adventure, you should also modify the *shalm of the fifth wind* to make it a minor or major magic item, balancing its monetary value with the adventure's challenges. The number of daily spells contained in Bemdroch's *shalm of the fifth wind* should not exceed the tiefling's bard levels. For example, if Bemdroch has five bard levels, the *shalm of the fifth wind* should contain no more than five bard spells, such as *hold person, sound burst, confusion, slow,* and *shout* (each usable once per day).

Also, if you want to stage a bigger fight in area 3, you can populate the sacred courtyard with a band of archers recruited by Hoograg (half a dozen low-level orc warriors, for instance). These minor foes would spread under the arcade and take full advantage of the cover provided by the pillars, distracting the heroes while the ogre sneak attacks. They could even substitute their normal melee attacks with attempts to aid the ogre and improve his chances of hitting (see the "Aid Another" rule on page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Skills: Climb +8, Disable Device +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +6, Jump +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Search +6, Spot +4, Use Rope +4. *Feats:* Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub).

Languages: Common, Giant.

Possessions: Leather armor, Huge greataxe, Huge longspear, 50-foot rope, bag with 300 gp and miscellaneous junk.

Tactics: If he has time to prepare, Bemdroch casts *endure elements* (fire), *entropic shield, mage armor,* and *protection from good* on himself. He then plays his *shalm of the fifth wind* (a double flute), calling upon its *scare, hold person,* and *sound burst* powers. If Bemdroch loses more than half his hit points, he casts *entangle* and uses his *darkness* ability to hamper pursuers and flees inside the shrine. Given the opportunity, he uses his *cure moderate wounds* spell on himself.

Hoograg throws his longspear at any PC climbing or flying into the courtyard from above. He then switches to his greatclub and attacks any foe who comes within reach or tries to harm Bemdroch. If the tiefling is killed, the ogre has a 50% chance of being demoralized by his accomplice's screams. In this case, Hoograg climbs out of the courtyard (DC 15 Climb check) and uses his rope to lower himself down the outside wall. He then flees into the wilderness. The ogre takes his bag, but not his camping equipment or longspear.

Development: If he escapes, Hoograg might come back for revenge in a successive adventure or return to the shrine at a later date to reclaim it as his lair.

4. Bemdroch's Quarters.

The north wall of this rectangular, 15-foot-tall room is decorated with a clay bas-relief depicting a 7-foot-tall, full figure of Obad-Hai. The god plays his shalm between two stylized mountains and appears to be walking on water. In the middle of the room rests a wooden bed with a pillow and a wool rug neatly folded over it. At the foot of the bed sits a small chest. A 3-foot-tall clay urn stands in the southeast corner on a metal trivet.

This room, traditionally used by the shrine's keeper, is now occupied by Bemdroch. If the PCs manage to reach this area without alerting the shrine's denizens, Bemdroch is resting here. (Since the PCs are more likely to encounter the tiefling in the courtyard, his statistics are listed in area 3.)

The tiefling keeps **Treasure #1** in the unlocked wooden chest at the foot of the bed. The clay urn, once used for ritual purposes, is empty. Inspecting the floor, heroes who make a successful Search check (DC 25) notice that a stone slab can be removed with ease. Under the slab, a small cavity in the rock contains **Treasure #2**. The bas-relief is nonmagical and harmless. The wooden bed is fitted in the floor and immovable.

Treasure #1: Inside the chest are the following items: an ivory drinking horn rimmed with silver (20 gp), a small golden bell (30 gp), a golden bowl (100 gp), a clay statuette of a weasel (worthless), and a small pouch containing three raisins. The raisins are magical, each the equivalent of a *potion of vision.*

Treasure #2: In the cavity under the floor slab is a pouch with the following gems: 17 assorted pieces of lapis lazuli, azurite and moss agate (total value 170 gp) and a single polished tourmaline (100 gp).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the heroes defeat Bemdroch, the shrine is freed of his evil influence. Shortly thereafter, a cleric of Obad-Hai named Voniem (male half-elf Clr5, NG) shows up to take the tiefling's place. Give the party a story award of 1,000 XP, but only if they did not offend Obad-Hai by defaming his shrine (which includes setting it ablaze) or plundering the votive offerings in area 2. If the PCs slay Hoograg, they might be able to collect a reward from the nearby townsfolk by delivering the ogre's head (see "Beginning the Adventure" for details).

If the heroes freed Bogren's hoe from the ash tree without stealing Obad-Hai's offerings or burning down Ash Temple, the hero's prophecy of coming back is fulfilled by his ghost, which appears the base of the tree and commends the PCs for their courage. Read or paraphrase the following:

The rusty hoe shines brightly, and motes of supernatural light dance around the roots of the ash. The motes coalesce in mid-air, assuming the translucent form of a handsome, middle-aged warrior. The ghost looks at you and smiles.

Creature (EL —): The benevolent ghost is all that remains of Bogren, a neutral good 15th-level ranger (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 54, for the elite ranger's statistics and the *Monster Manual*, page 212, for further information on ghosts). Use Bogren's ghost as you like; some ideas include:

- The extensive knowledge gained by Bogren during his adventuring career allows the PCs to learn an important secret of your campaign world.
- Bogren asks the PCs to complete his last quest. According to legend, the quest involved the slaying of a colossal creature (a giant, dragon, or whatever you prefer). The ghost tells the PCs where to find his earthly remains (and, maybe, his equipment) and gives them directions to the creature's demesne.
- The ghost transforms the rusty hoe into a useful magic item. Suggestions include a *+1 shock composite shortbow*, *+1 halfspear of ghost touch*, white ash *staff of healing* (with 12 charges), *wand of bull's strength* (50 charges), *+2 amulet of natural armor* (shaped like Obad-Hai's visage), *+2 periapt of Wisdom*, or *+2 darkwood shield*.

After the ghost's interaction with the PCs, the spirit disappears and the old hoe (if not transformed into a magic item) turns to dust. Ω

Tito writes: "I came across an engraving showing the origins of Muzio Attendolo Sforza, a famous Italian mercenary captain in the first half of fifteenth century. According to one legend, when he was just a young farmer, Muzio decided to join a company of soldiers-of-fortune because the hoe he had thrown into a tree did not fall back." From this legend, "The Shalm's Dark Song" was born.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

You can check for random encounters as the PCs make their way to and from Ash Temple. Roll d% and consult the chart below:

Roll d%	Random Encounter	EL
01-70	No Encounter	—
71-80	Aranea Scout (1)	4
81-90	Centaur Hunter (1)	3
91-00	Grigs (4)	4

Aranea Scout: An aranea colony recently moved into a cave network deep in the forest. The PCs encounter an aranea scout that has assumed the form of a forest gnome named Hygwert. He claims to be a "woodland wanderer," asking PCs questions about the local area, hoping to glean some information about nearby towns and other troublesome creatures that dwell in the forest.

Aranea (1): hp 19; *Monster Manual*, page 19.

Centaur Hunter: T'kon the centaur has been hunting araneas in the forest, attempting to find the colony's lair. He asks PCs whether they've seen any suspicious humanoids in the woods, hoping they can provide some clue to the araneas' whereabouts.

Centaur (1): hp 26; *Monster Manual*, page 33.

Grigs (4): These sprites play tricks on the PCs but mean no real harm. They fear the araneas and know the location of the aranea colony's hidden tunnel network.

Grigs (4): hp 2 each; *Monster Manual*, page 172 (sprite).

ENCOUNTER LEVEL CHART

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (ELs) for all encounters in "The Shalm's Dark Song."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
—	Assassin Vine (1)	3
1	Dire Weasels (2)	4
2	Bone Constructs (2)	5
3	Hoograg, Male Ogre Rog3 with Bemdroch	5 +4
4	Bemdroch, Male Tiefling Brd3/Clr4	7

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PLAYTESTERS

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David Eckelberry
Brian Hancock
Kim Ryker
Jimmie Lee
Jeff Alvarez
Chad Verrall
Tom Demayo
Ed Walker
Steve McKagan
Rasilind Sveinsson
Greg Ryker

BARE NECESSITIES

I really like the mag and have been using it since Issue #1! Overall I really like the new look. One thing that would be nice is if you could add maps for the players (where appropriate) that match the same high standards that the DM maps. Often you have a great looking map which I can't show the players because it has all the encounter tags on it!

Thanks for all your hard work. It's well appreciated!

Simon Mackeown
via email

We don't have the space in an issue to print DM and player versions of every map, but we do like to provide DMs with the occasional player handout. Our official web page (www.wizards.com/dungeon/welcome.asp) features free, downloadable maps with the encounter tags deleted so you can use the maps as player handouts.

BETTER THAN POGS

I would like to thank you for including the monster tokens. At first I was hesitant, thinking to myself "What's this, pogs?" Then I remembered the last game I played, in which I had used pennies and dice to represent a kobold horde, some giant weasels, and their leaders. While I have tons of miniatures, I don't have time to paint them like I did when I was younger and didn't work full time. The tokens are thus very useful.

THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE AS MANY MAMMOTH DUNGEONS ANYMORE.

I noticed that the last issue included an ad for "Cardboard Heroes" by Steve Jackson Games. I was sad to see it still at the printers when I hit the web site, but it will definitely be on order. I was thinking that the monster tokens would make a good product for Wizards of the Coast to publish. Using the monster token format, you could go through all kinds of previous art and make collections of monsters at little cost. I know I would buy such a product. Perhaps whenever an *Monster Manual* supplement comes out, it could have a page that is just monster tokens for everything in that compendium.

I will always collect miniatures that look nice (after all, the PCs and über-villain should never be just "cardboard"), but for those times when I'm forced to use an orc miniature to represent a drow, the monster tokens would be well appreciated.

Phillip Wallace
via email

LIKES & DISLIKES

As a loyal reader for the past 3 or 4 years, let me put in my thoughts on what I like and don't like.

As for the new look of the magazine, I prefer the old black-and-white style, mainly because the text was smaller. There don't seem to be as many mammoth dungeons anymore.

I like the new full color art pages, yet the quality is simply not the same as the old magazine. Also, it is really necessary to repeat the front page twice? It was good to see how thick Issue #84 was! I must also applaud this issue for having several high-level adventures; as a DM of a 12th-level party, I am running out of high-level adventures. It's not easy to make an adventure every week with *disintegrate, find the path, commune, fabricate,* and *harm* spells causing havoc. The new D&D game allows parties to easily reach levels in the 13-17 range, and this should be taken into consideration.

I was hoping "Glacier Season" would be appearing in Issue #85, but never mind.

I took a look at the submissions page and must disagree with several things. First, I believe certain cliché monsters are a great thing, simply because no adventures ever seem to really feature dragons or wizards. I have DMed for 9 years now, yet our party has ever fought only two dragons and one high-level wizard. I love the dungeon-based adventures, but I like a balance between other settings.

The new monster tokens don't really seem worthwhile. I'd rather you saved the cash and bought us another adventure. I do like to see adventures with new spells, items, and so forth.

Finally, why is every adventure designed for PCs of a single specific level? I'd prefer to see a total party level (or average level) with some adventures catering to parties who are half way between a level (for instance, two 6th-level characters and two 7th-level characters).

John Harold
via email

We love getting letters like this—lots of specific feedback about the contents and format of the magazine.

We also liked the black-and-white format (it was elegant and cost effective), but a b&tw magazine can't compete with color mags on the newsstand—hence the decision to go "full color." We will strive in future issues to uphold the high artistic standards set by earlier issues, showcasing new illustrators in addition to fan favorites. Let us know which artists you like best, and we'll try to feature them more often!

I would love to publish more high-level adventures, especially ones designed for characters of 16th-20th level, but we're limited by what we receive from our contributors. (And you're right—designing good high-level adventures is tough!) I hope that you enjoy "Glacier Season" in this issue, and we promise to publish more high-level adventures as we get them.

We've featured a number of large dungeon-based adventures in recent issues and plan to continue this trend, but we also have several modules set in non-dungeon settings, including cities and unusual climates/settings. We're also receiving more Side Treks (finally!), so expect some of those, too.

It's true that our submission guidelines discourage authors from using "clichéd creatures," but only because we see so many submissions featuring them. New contributors hoping to get their work published face less competition by proposing scenarios with unusual creatures and foes (such as the tiefling bard/cleric in "The Shalm's Dark Song" or the evil twins in "The Cradle of Madness"). However, that doesn't mean we won't print adventures featuring evil wizards and dragons. "Glacier Season" is a good example.

The new D&D game is more precise than previous editions, which is why adventures are tailored to four PCs of a particular level (as opposed to parties of varying size and level). Feel free to extrapolate from this "baseline." For instance, a module designed for four 7th-level PCs would probably work just

as well with five or six 6th-level PCs or three 8th-level PCs. We also include "Scaling the Adventure" sidebars to provide suggestions for simplifying or complicating key encounters. The Dungeon Master's Guide *provides further general advice on adjusting encounters for parties of mixed level.*

Oops. I just realized that this response is longer than your letter and that's never a good thing—I'll just shut up now.

WHITHER STAT BLOCKS?

I'd like to comment on the abbreviated creature statistics you are now using for your adventures. I think that eliminating all statistics except for hit points is a mistake and extremely frustrating. Keeping just the hp and telling the DM to refer to the *Monster Manual*—are you kidding? What's the point of even listing the hp if there are no other stats listed?

As a DM, I found that when the stat block template was used, the adventures ran much more smoothly for the players and me. I understand the need to prepare the adventure ahead of time, but writing down all the information myself proves to be just as inconvenient as flipping though the *Monster Manual* for the creature's stats. This process slows down the game. I usually jot down a few important statistics on a post-it note, such as AC, attack modifiers and damage, and stick them up on my wall. My players, however, always come up with something that requires me to check the full stat block, such as the creature's Spot check modifier, Charisma score for Diplomacy checks, or Hit Dice. What happens when you publish an adventure for the Forgotten Realms campaign? Will I have to go out and purchase the *Monster Compendium: Monsters of Faerûn* book to run that adventure? I can only imagine how frustrating this change can be for novice players and DMs.

Bring back the full creature statistics in future adventures.

Ron Wroczynski
via email

ELIMINATING ALL STATISTICS EXCEPT FOR HIT POINTS IS A MISTAKE AND EXTREMELY FRUSTRATING.

When we presented full creature "stat blocks" in Issue #82, readers freaked because the stat blocks were too long and ate up too much space. We decided to compromise and present full stat blocks only for unique creatures, advanced or variant creatures (modified versions of those appearing in the rules), templated creatures, and important NPCs. We would not provide stat blocks for creatures taken straight from the Monster Manual. *This has enabled us to devote more space to the actual encounters instead of duplicating information that already exists in an readily accessible format.*

We assume that every DM who runs adventures from the magazine (or, for that matter, any D&D module) has the three core rulebooks. Since we require DMs to reference the Player's Handbook *and* Dungeon Master's Guide *for game rules, we figured it was appropriate to direct DMs to the* Monster Manual *for basic creature statistics.*

If we publish a Forgotten Realms adventure that references creatures from the Monsters of Faerûn *supplement, we will mention in the adventure's introduction that this product is needed to run the adventure. (You'll have to excuse us for making DMs buy the book to run the adventure.) We will break this rule on a case-by-case basis. For instance, if a module makes extensive use of one particular creature, we could provide a complete stat block for that creature to save DMs some time and money. I just don't want an 8-page adventure turning into a 14-page adventure because of a preponderance of creature stat blocks.*

TOKEN GRIPES

Your monster tokens are great, but I have a few gripes.

#1. There aren't many maps large enough for use with the game tokens. It would be nice if your maps could be big enough to support the tokens' scale.

#2. The tokens take forever to cut out. Is there a way you can make it easier for us to get to the tokens?

#3. I love the artwork! It would be nice if there were more pictures to add flavor to the adventures. One can never go wrong with more fantasy artwork. I can't believe anyone would want fewer pictures and more words (your magazine definitely needs more artwork to have that "fantasy feel" to it).

Michael Yunker
United States Navy

It might be cool to include—once in a while—a poster-sized map of an important encounter area or location perfect for use with the monster tokens. Even better, I would love to see a Side Trek adventure designed to be played out with monster tokens and a poster map. (Hint hint.)

Perforating the monster tokens makes the cards prohibitively expensive to produce, so we opted for the more tedious "cut them out yourself" tokens.

We include as many maps and illustrations as our art budget can allow. Once I know how many maps will appear in an issue (based on the needs of each adventure), I can figure out how much money is left to buy illustrations. Reprinting the cover art inside the magazine saves us some money and enables me to commission more partial-page illustrations than the magazine could otherwise afford. For special features such as illustration booklets (like the one created for "The Harrowing" in Issue #84), we'll use cheaper black-and-white art.

BETTER THAN POGS

This is my first letter, and I'd like to be one of the billions of people who compliment and congratulate you on the latest incarnation of the D&D game. For this letter, I'd like to ask three questions:

#1. Can a character move 5 feet to get out of an opponent's threatened area, cast a spell at that opponent, and not provoke an attack of opportunity (from that opponent)? The core rulebook seems to indicate not, but *Dragon Magazine* #277 (page 116) seems to contradict.

#2. I bought *The Living Greyhawk Gazetteer*, promptly throwing out my 2nd-Edition campaign world. In Issue #85, on page 36, there is a map of the city of Narwell (plus a brief description on page 35). Please tell me that there is a sourcebook with similar city maps of all the cities in the Flanaess. Is this so? If so, how can I buy it? If not, is there a product that would help me generate towns, cities, and villages?

#3. Is there a product detailing the entire City of Greyhawk, including all maps, links to the Underdark, sewer systems, castles, keeps, and political power structures?

Mark Pedersen
Florence, AZ

Thank you for the letter, Mark. To answer your questions:

#1. If moving 5 feet gets you out of an opponent's threatened area, you can cast a spell without provoking an attack of opportunity from that opponent. Some creatures have a reach greater than 5 feet (giants, for example), in which case you will provoke an attack of opportunity unless you successfully cast on the defensive (see Player's Handbook, *page 125).*

#2. There is no sourcebook that provides maps or detailed descriptions of the cities of the Flanaess, but the DUNGEON MASTER's Guide *(Chapter 4) has rules for generating towns.*

#3. The Living Greyhawk Journal, *produced by the RPGA Network, recently published a poster-sized map of the City of Greyhawk in a recent issue. If you're interested in receiving goodies for the Greyhawk campaign setting, you should consider becoming a Network member. Here's the RPGA's contact info for North America:*

RPGA Network
P.O. Box 707
Renton, WA 98057-0707
Email: custserv@wizards.com
Phone: 1-800-324-6496
Fax: 425-687-8287
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Cover by Stephen Daniele

ISSUE #88 PREVIEW

THE SEVENTH ARM

By Tito Leati

A demonic medallion is the key to untold riches . . . or your doom. A D&D adventure for 7th-level characters.

THE DOOR FROM EVERYWHERE

By Roger E. Moore

Hidden beyond magic doorways are the lost secrets of the Netherese empire. Explore them at your peril. A D&D FORGOTTEN REALMS adventure for 6th-level characters.

THE WELL OF TYRINTH

By Tim Hitchcock

She lives in the depths. She lives in the darkness. She lives to kill. A D&D adventure for 5th-level characters.

MAKE IT BIG

By Jeff Quick

When you hang with hill giants, a little creativity can go a long way. A D&D Side Trek for 9th-level characters.

AND MORE!

PUT ME IN CHARGE!

I have two complaints that I wish you and the editorial staff would consider:

You have received enough write-ins from players to know that everyone isn't going to scrap their 2nd-Edition AD&D game for the new 3rd-Edition D&D game. Your response to David Argell in Issue #84 in the "Letters" column said, "From this issue forward, we will publish D&D adventures only." I ask that you reconsider and accept submissions from those of us who still wish to play AD&D adventures without having to adapt or re-compose D&D adventures from your magazine.

Surely, from among all the adventure submissions that you receive, you can publish 5-6 adventures each issue, and the selections could take into account the level of play featured in previous issues? Here's an example:

Issue	Adventure Levels	# of Adventures
82	1-2-3-3	4
83	1-2-4-4-6	5
84	3-5-7-10-15	5
85	2-5-7-9	4
86	3-5-6-7	4

Adapting D&D adventures to 2nd Edition is easy. All you need is some imagination.

As you can see, two-thirds of the adventures you've published in the first five 3rd-Edition issues have been for adventures set at 6th-level or lower, and three of those five issues contained only four adventures! I know that everyone else who enjoys your magazine will echo my sentiments when I say I would like to see at least six adventures in each bi-monthly issue, and I would like to see an even mixture of adventure levels. My suggestion would be to "schedule the publication of adventures" to help DMs fill a campaign from three or four magazine issues. Consider the following suggestion:

Issue	Adventure Levels	# of Adventures
90	1-1-2-2-3-3	6
91	4-4-5-5-6-6	6
92	7-7-8-8-9-9	6
93	10-10-11-11-12-12	6
94	13-13-14-14-15-15	6
95	13-13-14-14-15-15	6

Within one calendar year (6 bi-monthly issues), you can publish adventures that could take a single group of PCs from 1st- to 15th-level, and there would be a good selection at each level of play from the submissions you receive during the year. Is something like this feasible? Why don't you publish my suggestion in an upcoming issue and see what kind of feedback you receive from your buyers and readers?

Lewis Steven Powell
Tennessee Colony, TX

We are 100% committed to supporting the new D&D game. Publishing modules for out-of-print editions would be personally advantageous to AD&D loyalists, but we would confuse new readers and casual newsstand buyers. Furthermore, we would be undermining our company's efforts to market and sell the new D&D game.

We cram as many adventures as possible into every issue, but we're limited by the length and number of publishable manuscripts we receive. Frankly, I'm more concerned about quality than quantity (4 or 5 outstanding modules are better than 6 or 7 mediocre ones), and 4 adventures is still a pretty good deal for $5.99. I would like to publish more shorter adventures and high-level adventures, but we haven't received enough outstanding ones.

We want DMs to find something they can use in every issue. Making them wait 5 issues for a high-level module seems harsh. Similarly, printing 1st- to 3rd-level adventures only once every six issues would not make certain readers very happy. We can please more readers most of the time by offering a balance of low-level, mid-level, and high-level modules whenever possible. At least, that's what we've learned in the past 15 years.

WANNA BE AN ARTIST

First of all, I wanted to commend you on the module "Lord of the Scarlet Tide" (Issue #85). I thought it was phenomenal. I adapted it for my AD&D campaign, and my PCs gobbled it up like Peeps Easter candy left on the shelf for a couple days (trust me, that's good).

Adapting D&D adventures to 2nd Edition is easy. All you need is some imagination. Heck, if you don't have that, you shouldn't step behind a DM screen. One of my players is thinking about running a 3rd Edition game and has all the core rulebooks plus our combined collection of *DUNGEON Magazine* issues.

I was wondering whether you guys could tell me what I need to begin a lucrative career in fantasy illustration? I'm actually pretty good. My PCs love that I illustrate almost everything in my game.

Derrick Adcox
Lumberton, NC

Let me put on my Art Director's Hat for a moment.

I know very few artists who have found "lucrative" careers in fantasy illustration. Most of the artists I know have full-time jobs on the side. A few, such as Todd Lockwood and Brom, are so incredibly talented that they have made full-time careers as fantasy illustrators—but they're the exception, not the rule.

I often assign projects to artists whose work I've admired in DRAGON Magazine or other D&D game products. As a new artist, you have a couple options:

(1) Send me a portfolio containing sample copies of your most recent color and black-and-white work. Please don't send originals, as I like to keep portfolios on file and browse through them when I'm looking for new artists to illustrate particular adventures.

(2) If you have a web page featuring samples of your work, you can email me the web address and I'll check it out.

Unfortunately, I don't have time to critique artist portfolios. If I like your work and have an assignment that suits your style, I will contact you. I prefer artists who can illustrate dynamic scenes, vary their technique, and bring their own ideas to the table. Although it helps to be familiar with the D&D game, I am more interested in artists who are enthusiastic and capable of meeting our tight deadlines.

WANNA BE AN AUTHOR

I'm interested in submitting proposals to *DUNGEON Magazine*. I'm not a subscriber, but I buy a newsstand copy whenever I see one. Issue #86 contained modules by Tracy Hickman and other fantasy powerhouses. Needless to say, I was a little bit intimidated.

My question is, as a contributor, how much competition do I have? How many modules do you guys get, and how many are really good but you just don't have space to publish? How many modules do you request as opposed to the number of proposals you receive?

P.S. What would it take to get a job doing stuff like this?

Chris Brinker
via email

First, let me take off my Art Director's Hat and put on my Editor-in-Chief's Hat. (It just barely fits these days!)

Don't be intimidated by the names appearing in Issue #86. We like to encourage new authors to submit work to DUNGEON Magazine, *and we try to include adventures by at least one new author in every issue!*

Competition is fierce. We receive 30-40 proposals a week and request only a handful of manuscripts. Our submission guidelines provide detailed info on how to "pitch" your idea. Convincing us to read the complete manuscript is the toughest hurdle; if you can sell us on the idea and we request the adventure, chances are pretty good that we'll buy it provided the manuscript lives up to our expectations (based on your initial proposal) and follows the proper adventure format and guidelines.

If you submit a fabulous, well-written adventure, we'll buy it and schedule it for the next available issue. We never reject an excellent adventure just because we have several issues' worth of adventures in inventory. Still, we tend to plan issues well in advance, and it could be as long as a year before your adventure finally sees print—but rest assured, it will get published eventually.

Getting a job at Wizards of the Coast requires equal measures of experience, expertise, and good timing. Getting your work published in the magazines is a good start—at least, it worked for me! To see what sorts of jobs are available at Wizards of the Coast, visit our Career Opportunities page at ***www.wizards.com/company.***

ANTI-PERKINS?

I was just curious whether there was any plan to move away from the emphasis on so-called "site-based" adventures in *DUNGEON Magazine*? I mean, there is nothing wrong with them, but story-based and character-based adventures are good too and should be given equal time. I think While the "return to the dungeon" was a good idea to get people used to the new rules, soon it will be a year that the books have been out and I'd rather see *Dungeon Magazine* adventures show how the new 3E rules expand in a variety of settings and situations.

So, what do others think?

The Anti-Perkins
via message board

We tend to publish more site-based adventures because they're relatively easy for DMs to run and readers enjoy them (by and large). Event-based scenarios are harder to write because they can't be too linear; the trick with event-based adventures is not to "lead the players by the nose." The perfect event-based scenario—and consequently the hardest to write—is one that gives players choices without making life miserable for the DM. We have some event-driven modules planned for future issues, including an particularly memorable one by 3rd-Edition lead designer, Jonathan Tweet. You'll love it, I promise. Ω

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by Christopher West